

Laying on of Hands
UPON
BAPTIZED BELIEVERS,
As such,
Proved an Ordinance of Christ.

In Answer to Mr. Davenport's former
Book, Intituled,
A Treatise of Laying on of Hands.

The Second Edition.

WITH
A brief ANSWER to a late Book
called, *A Treatise concerning Laying on
Hands*; written by a nameless Author.

By B. Keach *

Pfal. 119. 141. *I am small and despised,
yet do not I forget thy Precepts.*

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THE HISTORY OF THE

AMERICAN

REVOLUTION

IN TWO VOLUMES

BY

JOHN ADAMS



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The Epistle Dedicatory.

To the Congregations of our Lord Jesus Christ, baptiz'd upon Confession of Faith, and under Imposition of Hands, particularly in South-Wales, and more generally throughout England; Grace, Mercy, and Peace be multiplied.

Brethren,

Notwithstanding the glorious Light broken forth among us in these later Times, yet we see gross Darknes covering the face of the Earth; nay, and our Heavens are not so clear as we hope e're long to behold them: for tho' *the Light is come, yet the Glory of the Lord* is but rising upon us; ours is but the Morning of that long'd-for Day, and poor *Sion* is but looking forth of the Wilderness: hence are so many Divisions amongst us; we speak as we see, and according to the Light received, and as we are bound by the Authority of Divine Precept to walk: God gradually discovers Himself, and the true Order and Form of his House and Worship unto us: and tho' we are still labouring under many difficulties, having had much Rubbish to remove (like the *Israelites* when they came out of the 70 years Captivity) and many have endeavoured to weaken our Hands, yet through infinite Grace we may say, the Foundation

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God's House is laid : Tho some who would build cannot find the Wall, and some strive to bring in a Stone of *Babylon* for a Corner, whilst others endeavour to cast away a principal Pillar, because it has lain a long time corrupted and covered amongst the Antichristian Rubbish. Reformation is a glorious work, and 'tis what we all long and breathe after. Mr. D. and others have been helpful to the Church of God with respect to Baptism, but for want of further Light have lost their way : by which means I perceive many, in one respect much behind them, in another are got before them, and may (as far as I can judg) get into *Canaan* as soon as they. Imposition of Hands is the Principle of our present Controversy ; and it is to be lamented, that in this day we should be forced to a Work of this nature. Our Brother on this Consideration was dissuaded from doing what we now see published, and rather on this account than any other ; and tho some judg'd it would do the Truth it self much injury, by weakning the hearts or hands of those established in it, or enquiring after it, yet some judg'd it scarce deserved an Answer : But others considering how well he wrote on the other Principle, thought it might the more likely tend to intangle the weak, and more unwary Christian. Now as to my undertaking the Work, as I judged my self incapable in respect of others : so it was not my purpose to have been concerned, till put upon it by some in this City ; and considering the backwardness of others, it the more induc'd me to it. And tho but abruptly done, yet such as it is, I present it to the serious perusal and consideration.

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deration of all, whose Souls long after the goodly full restoration, and perfection of *Sion*; hoping the God of Truth will cause it to entertainment in the hearts of the humble, tho I expect it will be slighted by such as are passionately opinionated of their own attainments and perswasions, and who are below receiving instruction from their Inferiours. It is the grief of some of you (as I believe) to see any whom you love and tender in the Lord, opposing so holy an Institution of Jesus Christ; but however, this you will find in perusal of this Discourse, that tho too many Baptized Christians utterly disallow and reject it, nay seem not desirous to know the Mind of God herein, yet many godly Persons both of the *Presbyterian* and *Independent* Perswasions (tho dark and negligent about the business of Baptism) have longed, and searched after the knowledg and discovery of this Truth, nay have attained to a good understanding and satisfaction herein, having laboured after a perfect restoration of it to its primitive use and purity, refining it from the Corruptions and Mutations of the *Papish* Church, not only in respect of those abominable additions and mixtures of *Chrism*, and other ridiculous Ceremonies in its administration, but also of the Subject to whom of right it belongs, as abundantly appears in a Treatise of Mr. *Jonathan Hanmer*'s, writ 1658. when tis apparent their Spirits were very hot upon it. I find Mr. *Caryl* (writing Epistolary wise in commendation of the said Book) speaking thus: *I conceive (saith he) the Learned Author of these elaborate Exercitations has deserved well of the Churches, by clearing the way of those*

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admissions from Scripture-grounds, and the concurrent Testimony of many, both Antient and Modern Writers; also by discovering and removing those Popish Additions and Pollutions, which by several steps have crept into it. And further he says, that this ingenious and pious Overture holds forth more, than most Churches have hitherto attained.

Also Mr. Vennings's honest and judicious expressions (in his Epistle to the same Treatise) I can't well omit; who speaking of Reformation and Godliness, saith, *Either by reason of our dim-sightedness, being not able to see as far off, nor penetrate into the depth and bottom of them, or by reason of the abusive Traditions, and corrupt Glosses with which for many Ages they have been clouded and over-cast, many Truths seem not so clear, but they need further clearing; among others, such as relate to Church-Discipline and Order, have long been under debate, and not without some considerable advantage, tho I humbly conceive we have not attained so far as to be already perfect. It remains therefore that we press forward, and not be so passionately fond of our prepossest Conceptions, as not to have the patience to consider what may be offered to us, especially by such as wish well to Sion, and desire to see the Gospel-Temple in its Beauty. If any Persons are spirited to search after further knowledge in these Affairs, to dig for it as for hid Treasures, and when they have found a Vein of Golden Ore, to refine and stamp it for us, we should be in readiness to receive the Truth in the love of it, and pay the tribute and homage of Obedience for the sake of the God of Truth, whose Image and Superscription it bears.*

What

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What great and profitable Pains my much honoured Friend, the Reverend Author of the ensuing Exercitation, has taken in this one Particular presented to consideration, and with what Curiousness without Curiosity, with what Learning without Ostentation, &c.——you will best perceive by the perusal of it; and tho my Opinion be of little signification, yet I cannot forbear to say, that as to the substance and main of the design I judg it of so considerable importance, that I see not how it can be neglected without very great prejudice to Church-Communion, to say no more. Haply some may be so nice as to be offended with the Name, and dislike Confirmation for fear of Bishoping, as if that old-fashioned Garment had but a piece of new-nam'd Cloth put to it, and drest up in another Mode: if it were so, can no good come out of Nazareth? Bonus odor veritatis ex re qualibet; but if any are under such a fear, I think I may assure them they are more afraid than hurt, yea afraid where no fear is, as they will quickly find if they please to come and see.

I could wish our dissenting Brethren would weigh the matter more seriously and moderately; and since there has been by many of different Perswasions so diligent a scrutiny made *ad veritatem investigandam*, and such holy longings after the mind of God herein, the result was hop'd to have been, a singular Agreement in the thing it self. But it may seem strange, I confess, to all discerning Christians, that such should not be able to discover or find out the Antichristian pollutions and mutations in Baptism, in respect of the Subject and Manner of Baptizing; which is so apparently contrary to the Gospel-rule and pattern also.

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O that the God of *Israel* would open the eyes of some eminent ones amongst them, to see the pure chrystal Stream of this Institution of Christ, or help them (to use Mr. *Wenning's* phrase) to find the *Vein of this Golden Ore*, since they will not receive it as refin'd and ready-stamp'd for them by such, whose Skill or Faithfulness they seem to suspect.

But, 1. How can they be perfect in Church-constitution and Order; whilst they miss the mark in so considerable an Ordinance as Baptism, taking a Stone of *Babylon* for a Foundation, and that for Baptism which is none? For it has been so grossly abused, (as a learned Writer noted in another case) that there is nothing remaining of it amongst them save the meer Name.

And, 2. May it not be admired to see Men of such Light and Conscience be only pleas'd with the Theory and notional part of an Ordinance of Christ? They see it to be a Gospel-Institution, but I could never yet understand they are in the practice thereof; *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

3. But how contrary to the Rule and glorious Doctrine of the Lord Jesus would they act, should they get into the practice thereof, whilst they so grievously err in the administration of Baptism, since that also wholly belongs to adult persons, as must be own'd if the Scriptures be a perfect and sufficient Rule for us to walk by, and express whatever is necessary to know concerning this as well as things of the like nature?

But probably some may object, Since most of the Authors mentioned in this Discourse for the further evincing the Truth contended for, are corrupt

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rupt either in Baptism or laying on of hands, or both, to what purpose are they produced?

In answer to which I must say, that what's offered on the account of Authors and Antiquity, has been occasionally done, Mr. *Danvers* having led us in that path. Nay, I might say, we are necessitated thereto by his means, unless we should leave one chief part of his Book unanswered, in regard he utterly denies the thing it self, *viz.* Laying on of hands upon baptized Believers, as such, affirming there is no mention made of any such thing or practice in the Scripture: and secondly, in saying the Antient Fathers and asserters of it flew mainly to Tradition, and the usage of the Church in the case. Should an Adversary utterly deny Water-baptism, however administred, and say it was never commanded by Christ, but is a meer human Invention, or Innovation of Man, yea and affirm that all the Fathers and Confessors, that heretofore pleaded for it, wholly made use of Tradition, and usage of the Church in vindication thereof: Would not any that is for Baptism judg it necessary, not only to prove it instituted by the Lord Jesus, and practised by the Apostles and primitive Christians, but also, in opposition to his Opponent, that those Writers both of former and later times who contended for it, did fly to the Scripture for its proof and confirmation, tho some of them could not do so as touching the Subject and Manner of Administration? Hence it is we have took the same method in the defence of an Ordinance of the same Nature and Authority.

And now, my dear Brethren, I cannot but acquaint you, that my Spirit has been much re-

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freshed to hear how the work of the Lord has been carried on of late amongst some of you, and the readines of many to receive this despised Truth. I am perswaded the more a Truth is opposed, the more it gets ground, and the Saints with others inquire after it: for since Mr. *Danvers's* Book came forth, at one Meeting in *London*, on one day, upon my own knowledg, near 30 persons came under the practice hereof: *Vincet veritas*, let Truth go on conquering, and to conquer; the Lord will arise and scatter all the clouds of Darkness and Opposition, and take away the reproach cast upon his Servants for their Witness to his Truth, and Zeal for his Name. Let them be ashamed who transgress without cause: if we are reproached, let us take it patiently, since it is for our precious Redeemer's sake, who hath said, *You are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you*; and in another Place, *Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and teach Men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of God*, Mat. 5. 11.

Brethren, remember the Spirit of God pronounces them worthy of commendation who stand fast, and keep the Ordinances as delivered to them, 1 Cor. 11. 2. and the more we see evil Men and Seducers (as those called *Quakers* and others) labouring on every side of us to tread under feet, and contemptuously despise all of them, let us stir up our selves with one heart in defence of them all; and as they are appointed as Conduit-pipes for conveyance of the Spirit, and blessings of the Gospel to our Souls, so let us walk as such that experience the inward Life and Virtue of them, that thereby

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we may beautify the Gospel and Doctrine of God and our Saviour in all things, having Lamps and Oil also in our Vessels, viz. the form of sound Words, and power of Godliness in our Hearts and Lives. And now finally, Brethren, that I may not be further tedious unto you, my breathings and desires are, *that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Lights, the God of all Comfort and Consolation,* would fill you with the knowledg of his Will in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding, grant you more clear and heavenly Communion with himself, and with one another in the paths of Peace and Righteousness, and enable you to walk inoffensively in all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work; and that the God of all Grace would establish, strengthen and settle you in his Truth and Ways, that so you may remain unmovable like a Rock in these evil and perilous times, wherein so many turn aside, giving ear to Seducers, Impostors, and lying Spirits, with which our Days so abound, that it will be a choice Blessing to be kept from falling, and preserv'd without blame till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now that *the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant,* would sanctify you throughout, and keep you from falling, and present you without spot before him, in the day of his glorious Appearance, shall be the constant and hearty Prayer of

Your Brother and Servant for Christ,
and his Truth sake,

Benjamin Keach.

The Epistle to the Reader.

THE Substance of this ensuing Discourse was formerly wrote and published in answer to Mr. Danvers's Book against laying on of Hands: but the former Impression (called Darknes vanquished) being quite gone, I now, upon earnest desires thereto, present thee with a new one; and the rather, because I have met with a later and short Tract wrote by a nameless Author against this sacred Ordinance, which is also here briefly answer'd. I have also some hopes it may tend to establish such Churches and Christians as are in the practice of it, and convince such as do oppose it; that so clear and precious an Ordinance may not be lost; Destroy it not for a Blessing that is in it. But being unwilling to be tedious to thee, I commit it to the Blessing of God, whose Appointment it is. Farewel.

Decem. 13.
1697.

Lay-

Laying on of Hands
UPON
BAPTIZED BELIEVERS,
 As such,
 Proved both from Scripture and Antiquity,
 to be a holy Institution of
J E S U S C H R I S T.

The INTRODUCTION.

AS it is matter of grief and trouble to many sober and pious Christians, so it is no less of admiration to see such eminent and worthy Persons beclouded and darkned concerning one Ordinance, that are so clear in, and so much for the practice of another. How well have some of our Brethren written concerning Baptism? And how have they defended it against the strongest opposition, as a glorious Institution of Jesus Christ? but yet how have they opposed this other sacred Ordinance, or holy Oracle of God? Heb. 5. 12. and Principle of the Christian Religion, viz. Imposition

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position of hands upon baptized Believers as such? which they have some of them cried down as much as they have cried Baptism up, rendring it nothing save a meer human Innovation, or Antichristian Forgery; whereas nothing can be more clear, than that it is of the same nature and authority with Baptism, and ought equally to be contended for, being inter prima Rudimenta Fidei Christianæ, among the first Rudiments of the Christian Faith. Dangerous it is to pull one stone out of the Foundation of the House of God: the Lord open their eyes to see their weakness. However, what they have written concerning this Principle, is in this ensuing Treatise examined, weighed, and particularly answered.

CHAP. I.

MR. *Danvers* in his *Introduction* tells us, pag. 3. after having given us an Account both from Scripture, and Antiquity, of the business of Baptism, in its Institution, Subject, Manner, and End, &c. that it may neither be unnecessary nor unprofitable to give us an account of *Laying on of hands*, not only because it immediately follows that of Baptism, Heb. 6. 1, 2. but more especially because for Confirmation (as it has been called) it had been next after Baptism so solemnly asserted, practised and enjoined, both in former and later times, as an Ordinance of Christ, and essentially necessary to Church-Communion: But what this *Laying on of hands* is, and how that of

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Confirmation is founded on the Word of God, he tells us, he shall consider, examin, and recommend it to the judgment of all discerning, and impartial Christians.

Reply. He hath in his Treatise of *Baptism* done well; *Jehovah* blest his Work and Pains therein. And is it so in very deed? Is the ground and reason why he undertook to write about *Laying on of hands*, because it immediately follows *Baptism*, *Heb. 6. 1, 2*? Did he find it so clearly there? and has that of Confirmation, as it is called, been so solemnly asserted in former and later times as an Ordinance of Christ, and necessary to Church-Communion? Methinks if this be so, he should have been very careful how he spake or wrote against such an Ordinance, which so immediately follows Baptism according to the Scripture; and more especially considering what he says about Authors and Antiquity, concerning Confirmation, or laying on of hands, it having been so solemnly asserted, practised, and enjoined, as above said.

Tho for my part I judg it not worth my while to make such a narrow search into *Authors, Canons, Decrees of General Councils*, and the like, as probably he and many may do: considering we have the Word of Christ so plain and clear in the case, what need we trouble our selves further, especially being satisfied, as some of the Fathers have said themselves, that no *Doctors*, nor *Councils* are of any authority or credit without the *Word of God*? Yet finding so many of the Antients speaking so clearly touching this Ordinance, tho under another name, it confirms me in my belief and practice

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rice herein; and one would think it should the more stumble them: for whatsoever credit, or esteem some of those Authors have whom he mentions, yet I judg he will grant *several* of them to be as famous as most who have written since the Apostles time, as hereafter may be hinted.

In the next place he tells us, what *method* he will observe in writing his Treatise, *viz.*

First, Give us an account what he finds of this Rite (as he is pleased to call it) in the New Testament.

Secondly, How asserted and practised by the Antients, with the Opinions of the Fathers, and Decrees of Councils.

Thirdly, How practised and enjoined by the Church of Rome.

Fourthly, How by the Church of England.

Fifthly, How maintained by some of the Presbyterian and Independent Perswasions.

Sixthly, How practised and enjoined by several of the Baptized Churches in this Nation.

Then he proceeds to shew, how *Laying on of hands* was us'd in the New Testament:

1. In Benediction, *Mark* 10. 16.
2. For Healing, *Mark* 6. 5.
3. For conferring the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit before Baptism, *Acts* 9. 17. After Baptism, *Acts* 8. 14.
4. In Ordination, *Acts* 6. 6. *1 Tim.* 4. 14. *Acts* 13. 3.

Reply. I readily grant what he says about the several sorts of *Laying on of hands*, and the use and end of them, but must needs except against what he

he speaks concerning the third sort: he affirms that Hands were laid upon Persons for conferring the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit; and mentions two Scriptures for proof, viz. *Acts 9. 17.* and *Acts 8. 14, 15.* in which affirmation he altogether begs the question, and proves nothing, nor removes what has been said to this very point. In this I must withstand him, for he goes too fast. I should be glad could I be an Instrument in the hand of Christ to rectify their understanding herein who doubt about it; for they seem to be much mistaken about that Text, *Acts 9. 17.* but especially that in *Acts 8. 14, 15.* I shall therefore offer something in the first place to this; Doth not the Scripture say plainly in *Acts 9. 17.* that *Ananias* put his hands upon *Saul*, that he might receive his sight? why should he say then, it was for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit? If that which is exprest to be the effects of *Ananias* his putting his hands on *Paul*, was the only end of that Service, which is according to his own arguings upon *Acts 8. 14. Acts 19. 16.* then it was only for his sight; for it is said he received his sight, but not a word of his receiving the Holy Ghost, when he laid his hand upon him: that he was sent to *Saul*, that he might receive the Spirit, is granted; but whether by laying on of hands, or some other means, is yet to be proved: And this being an extraordinary case, and different from that in *Acts 8. 14, 15.* viz. *Ananias* his laying hands on *Saul* as a blind Man, that he might receive his sight (which answers to that in *Mark 16. 18.*) and *Peter* and *John* lay-

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ing their hands on them in *Acts* 8. 14. as on baptized Believers as such, for their receiving the Holy Spirit, makes nothing to the Controversy depending, tho Mr. D. hath put them together, as if the Subject, Manner, and End, were one and the same.

But Secondly, to proceed to that Scripture *Acts* 8. 14. where mention is made of *Peter* and *John's* laying their hands on baptized Believers in *Samaria*, which our Brethren affirm was also to confer the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit; but how much they are mistaken herein, shall be examined: Since it appears not that the Apostles at *Jerusalem* did either send *Peter* and *John* to *Samaria* upon that account, or that they laid their hands upon those believing *Samaritans* to that only end, 'tis very strange Mr. D. or others should affirm any such thing; therefore to prevent this mistake, let us once again examine these Texts; *Now when the Apostles, which were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ('tis not said the extraordinary Gifts, but the Holy Spirit, those you see are the expresse words) for as yet (saith the Text) he was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus: then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost, Vers. 14, 25.* I know 'tis objected from the following words, that the Spirit came upon them in some visible or extraordinary manner, because *Simon* saw, that thro' laying on of the Apostles hands the Holy Spirit was given. This is only

only a supposition: for who can tell what kind of Manifestations of the Spirit might appear in them, to convince *Simon* that they had the Holy Spirit? The Text doth not say, they either *spake with Tongues*, or wrought Miracles. But if for arguments sake, we should grant they receiv'd the Spirit in some extraordinary manner, as those in *Acts 19.* it would not follow, that this was the absolute end of this Service; for if we may reason as they and others have done after this manner, that what was the effects of their laying their hands upon them, was the end why they laid on their hands, and that End is by none attained in these days, therefore *Laying on of hands* is not practicable in these days; we shall shew you the sad Consequences and Absurdities that would follow such an Inference. To proceed, 'tis said *Acts 4. 31.* that when the Apostles had *prayed*, the place was shaken where they were assembled; Now mark, because this Miracle was wrought as the effect of their praying, can it be thought that was the end of Prayer, or that we must not pray because no such effects are wrought now? And when *Philip* had baptized the Eunuch, *Acts 8. 39.* 'tis said the Spirit caught away *Philip*, that the Eunuch saw him no more: what a strange thing was this that followed Baptism? But now because this Miracle followed as the effect of that Administration then, shall we conclude it was the end of the Ordinance of Baptism? But again in *Acts 10. 44.* while *Peter* was preaching the Word to *Cornelius*, and unto those that were in his House, 'tis said, *The Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word, so that they spake with Tongues, &c.*

Now

Now shall we say, the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, or Miracles, were the end of Preaching, because such kind of Effects followed preaching? Surely none will argue so, that understand themselves: for if that was the End of preaching, because it was the Effect that followed, and that Effect now never following, we may say as many do, Preaching is ceased, if he and others argue right: for such and such extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit followed (say they) when baptized Believers did come under laying on of hands in the Apostles days, and these Gifts are not given now; therefore that Ordinance is ceased, it being only for the Confirmation of the Gospel.

Now say I, by the same Argument, all the Institutions of Christ may be denied, as well as laying on of hands: As *First*, Meeting and assembling together; see *Acts* 2. 1. 'tis said, *They were all met together with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a Sound from Heaven as of a rushing Wind, and it filled all the House where they were sitting. Vers. 2. And there appeared unto them cloven Tongues like fire, and sat upon each of them. Vers. 3. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with Tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Here is no mention of any other Ordinance, save only assembling together, God graciously being pleased first to confirm the Time of Worship under the Gospel, viz. the first Day of the Week, for so was the day of *Pentecost*, as Tradition has handed it down: and mind what effects followed. But,

First,

upon baptized Believers.

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First, 'Tis not so now, shall we therefore assemble together no more? *

Secondly, When the Apostles *prayed*, the House was shaken, but 'tis not so now; doth Prayer therefore cease to be a duty?

Thirdly, When Christ was baptized, there was a voice heard from Heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;* and the Spirit came down in likeness of a Dove. And when the *Eunuch* was baptized, the Spirit caught away Philip; but such Effects follow not now when Persons are baptized; *ergo* it's not the duty of any to be baptized now, if theirs be right Reason.

Fourthly, Peter preached to the Jews, *Acts 2.* and at one Sermon *three thousand* were converted: And he preached to *Cornelius*, *Acts 10.* and while he preached, the holy Spirit came upon them that heard the Word, *that they spake with Tongues, and magnified God.* But such Effects as these follow not now when we preach; *ergo* no Man is authorized to preach now, by their arguing.

Fifthly, When Paul laid his hands on those baptized Believers, *Acts 19.* the holy Spirit came upon them, and *they spake with Tongues, &c.* but these Effects follow not now when baptized Believers have hands laid upon them; must

* The Seekers use this Objection against all Ordinances, saying none are impowered to administer any, because not so indowed with Power from on High; and their Arguments fully agree with theirs herein against laying on of Hands. Of this let the rational judg.

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must we therefore lay hands no more? Surely we have no more reason to neglect or lay this aside, than we have all the other Ordinances, considering the like Effects followed them respectively, as well as Laying on of hands: But *contrariwise* I must needs say, instead of being stumbled, or weakned in my Faith and Practice concerning laying on of hands, from the consideration of those extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit being the Effects that followed once or twice as exprest in the Scripture, that I am thereby abundantly confirmed, and established in it, and that because I find every Gospel-Ordinance and Institution of Christ was in the primitive time more or less confirmed, according to *Heb. 2. 4.* by Signs, Wonders, and divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will. And finding this Ordinance of Imposition of Hands, so visibly owned by *Jehovah*, and wonderfully confirmed by the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, like as Assembling together, Prayer, Preaching, and Baptizing hath been; it is, I say, of an establishing nature to me. And I see no ground to except against this Ordinance more than any of the other, notwithstanding what ever hath been said or written against it from hence. And because I know it has stumbled many, that the end of laying on of hands, *Acts. 8. 19.* was for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, I shall be the larger upon this particular, fully to remove and take off this Objection, which in part has already been done. But to proceed, I affirm again that the end of that laying on of Hands, *Acts 8. 14, 15.* and *Acts 19. 6.* was not for

for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and I argue thus:

First, Because it was never propounded as the End of it, neither can it be prov'd it was. What can they instance in the Case, since what they mention of such and such Effects which followed, proves nothing in the least?

Secondly, It could not be for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, or Miracles, because not promised unto baptized Believers as such, nor was it ever given but to some particular Persons; only I grant, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, as he is the Comforter, according to John 14. 16. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, which shall abide with you for ever.* All the Disciples of Christ who believe, and are baptized, have the Spirit promised to them, as further might be made appear, *Act. 2. 38. Then said Peter, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit; for the Promise is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* The Spirit being so plainly promised to all that were obedient to Jesus Christ, or the Called of God, the Apostles that were at *Jerusalem*, hearing how God had called by his blessed Word and Spirit, the *Samaritans* to Obedience, they well knew, and were assured that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, was their Right, Promise and Privilege, as well as any other Gospel-Believers; and therefore sent them *Peter and John*, that they might receive (through the

the use of that holy Ordinance) the Promise of the Father: and upon consideration that the *Samaritans* were *Gentiles*, or a mixt People, or such as were not of the Seed of *Abraham* according to the Flesh, and some of the first of the *Gentile* Race that were called by the preaching of the Gospel, *Jehovah* was pleased to give some visible sign and demonstration of his receiving them into his Grace and Favour, to satisfy any of the *Jewish* Disciples that might doubt concerning the extent of the Blessings of Christ and the Gospel: for palpable it is that for some time after the Death and Resurrection of Christ, few of the Apostles themselves understood the glorious intent and purpose of the Almighty, in bringing in the *Gentiles*, making them fellow-Heirs, and of the same Body, and Partakers of his Promise in Christ, through the Gospel, Eph. 3. 6. This I conceive to be one reason, why God so visibly own'd the Ordinance of Laying on of hands when administred, as well as for the Confirmation of the Ordinance it self; and that Christ might convince them he had made good his Promise, John 14. 16. But if you will still say, that the Reason, End, or Cause why *Peter* and *John* did lay their hands on those baptized Believers, was not for the Spirit, the Comforter, as so considered, but for the extraordinary Gifts thereof, I shall proceed to a third Reason; and thus I argue:

Thirdly, Either *Peter* and *John*, when they laid their hands on those Believers, and prayed for the Spirit, prayed in Faith, or not in Faith: If in Faith, then they had (I presume) some ground

ground or *Promise* of God and Christ, to build their Faith upon, as to what they prayed for: But if it was for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, as some affirm, where shall we find any such *Promise* that they might ground their Faith upon? And is it not sinful to pray for that which God has no where promised, considering what the Scripture saith, *Rom. 14. 23*? There are divers Promises, as hath been hinted, made by God of giving the Spirit, I grant, but not the extraordinary Gifts †. God promised, he would pour out his Spirit on his Servants and Hand-maids; and our Lord Jesus in *John 14. 16.* promised the Comforter to all that love him, and keep his Commandments: And in *Acts 2. 38.* it is promised to all that repent, and are baptized; And doubtless it was by virtue of these Premises, or Promises of the like nature, that *Peter* and *John* prayed, and laid their hands on those Believers in *Samaria*, and *Paul* on those at *Ephesus*, *Acts 19.* or else shew us what Ground or Promise they had.

If you say, the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit were promised; then say I, they were promised to Persons of such or such a Name, or so or so qualified. Now surely none will say, to Persons of

† If any should object against me *Mark 16. 17, 18.* and say, miraculous Gifts are promised to such as do believe, &c. I answer, that by believing, cannot be meant the Grace of Faith in that place; for if it should, we may say, no man doth now believe, or hath true Faith in Christ: it is therefore meant of the extraordinary Gift of Faith, or Faith of Miracles, according to *1 Cor. 12. 9.* and *13. 2.* He that so believes, nothing can be too hard for him.

such or such a Name; therefore it must be promised to Persons so or so qualified, and those Qualifications also must be known: if the Qualifications be not Repentance, Faith, and Baptism, then assign what they are: If you say, Faith and Repentance be the Qualifications; then say I, the Promise of the extraordinary Gift is made to every Christian Man and Woman; yea and every sincere Believer must receive those Gifts, or God doth *fail* of his Promise: For I am sure there is not one Soul that is a Believer indeed, having obeyed from the heart the form of Doctrine taught and delivered to the Saints, but hath more or less received the Spirit of God, according to the Promise or Promises made to them as Persons so and so qualified or called, as hath already been minded.

Fourthly, The end of that Laying on of hands, *Acts 8.* could not be for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, because those extraordinary Gifts, or Miracles, *serve not for them that believe, but for them that believe not.* Now can any think, *Peter and John* were sent by the Apostles from *Jerusalem* to those that had received the Word, and were baptized in *Samaria*, for the profit and benefit only of the Unbelievers there, that they, *viz.* such as did not believe in *Samaria*, might by beholding the Miracles, or extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit given to them that did believe, be convinced that Jesus was the Christ? Surely no Man can think, or imagine such a thing, especially considering the Text says plainly, *They were sent to them that had received the Word, and were baptized; sent for*
their

their particular Comfort, and further Consolation in Christ Jesus, that so they might stand compleat in the whole Will of God, and might be made Partakers of the Spirit of Promise made to every believing Soul baptized, *Acts* 2. 38. for as much as it was their right, and they stood in great need of it, as all poor Souls do who enter themselves under Christ's Banner: For as our Lord Jesus, after he was baptized, had the Spirit descending upon him, and was straightway exposed to temptation from the Devil; even so are all his Followers, when they take up the Profession of the Gospel, to expect to meet with sore Trials, Temptations, and Afflictions, and therefore have need of more of the Spirit to strengthen, encourage, support, and comfort them, and to give them further assurance of the Love of God, that they may not flag, nor be disheartned, but may be abundantly enabled to overcome all Enemies and Opposition, and remain faithful to the Lord Jesus unto the death. To this end doubtless the Apostles sent *Peter* and *John* from *Jerusalem*; who when they came, pray'd and lay'd their hands upon those Men and Women baptized, even for the Holy Spirit of Promise, for their particular profit, comfort and benefit, and not for extraordinary Gifts or Miracles, which was ('tis plain from *Heb.* 2. 4.) for the Confirmation of the Gospel to them that believe not, (according to *1 Cor.* 14. 22.) *Wherefore Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not; but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but them which believe.*

Fifthly; This being so, it could not be for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, that the Apostles laid their hands on those in *Samaria*, because there was no need of further Miracles, forasmuch as *Philip* had wrought such mighty Miracles and Wonders in that City before, in so much that they were all convinced; yea the very Sorcerer himself believed, and continued with *Philip*, and wondred, beholding the Miracles and Signs which were done, *Acts* 8. 13. Surely the Apostles at *Jerusalem* hearing of those things, and how the People, yea the whole City, were convinced and satisfied that *Jesus* was the Christ, would never have sent *Peter* and *John* to do that work which was so effectually done before by *Philip*; and therefore I conclude, that that laying on of hands *Acts* 8. was not for Tongues, Miracles, or the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, as our Brethren affirm: and this being so, my work is near done already; for if they miss in giving us a true Account how Laying on of hands was used in the New Testament, they miss in the main case of all; and if that Laying on of hands, *Acts* 8. 14, 15. and *Acts* 19. was not for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, the greatest Objection is answered, and the chief stumbling-block taken out of the way of God's People: For if Prayer, and Laying on of hands was practised upon baptized Believers as such, as a Principle of Christ's Doctrine, for the promised Spirit, the Comforter as so considered, which is the absolute Right, Portion, and Privilege of every believing Soul to the end of the World, then doubtless the Ordinance must needs remain in full force and virtue

as God's way, means, or method of conveyance of the said Spirit to all his Chosen always, even until the end. But because I shall have occasion to speak more to this anon, I forbear enlarging upon it here.

C H A P. II.

Shewing that tho this holy Institution of Christ hath been corrupted by Antichrist, yet it ought not therefore to be rejected.

MR. *Danvers*, Pag. 6. proceeds to shew how Laying on of hands has been asserted by the Antients, and by the Canons and Decrees of several Councils; Pag. 15. how by the Church of Rome; Pag. 17. how by the Church of England; Pag. 24. how asserted by some both of the Presbyterian and Independent Perswasion, &c.

What earnings or advantage he could propound to himself by filling up so many Pages in his Book with Stories of this kind, I know not. Many (as I am informed, and some in my own hearing) do judg what he has done in this respect, makes more against himself than us; Nay some, who are for this Ordinance, seem to be much confirmed by what he has said concerning Antiquity in respect thereof, and look upon themselves as beholden to Mr. *Danvers* for his pains in searching into Authors, and in producing so much, both from *Antient* and *Modern* Writers,

for Laying on of hands as immediately following Baptism, and as necessary to Church-Communion: And I must confess, I did not think so much could have been produced from Authors and Antiquity in the case, as I perceive there may, having through his means, according as I am capable, made some search; Tho I must say, if there were ten times more to be urged on that account, had we not the Authority of God's Word to warrant our Practice, it would signify nothing: For we will say with *Ignatius*; *Whosoever speaks more than is written, altho he fast, altho he keep his Virginity, altho he work Miracles, altho he prophesy, yet let him seem to thee a Wolf amongst the Sheep:* Epist. ad Hierom.

But to proceed, I wonder Mr. *Danvers* should condemn, and wholly cast away Laying on of hands upon baptized Believers, and have nothing to do with it, because it had been corrupted by the false Church; the Subject, and Manner of Administration being quite altered, and changed; the Ordinance, or pure Institution being turned into abominable Superstition: may he not as well cast away *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* also, since they have been every way as much corrupted, changed, and polluted as this? Nay, what Ordinance has not? Our work is to discover, and remove all Popish Additions and Pollutions, which in the days of darkness crept in, that so we may see every Institution shining forth in its primitive purity and splendor; and not reject any Ordinance of Christ, because polluted by Antichrist. What tho (as he said) those *Popes*, *Councils*, and *Fathers*, that enjoined and im-

imposed Infants Baptism for an Ordinance of Christ, enjoined that of Confirming Infants?

Reply. If it was as *early* corrupted, altered, and changed as Baptism, ought we not, since God has given us the Light of his Word and Spirit, to *recover* it from those Corruptions as well as Baptism? Infants Baptism we all say, is a Popish Tradition, or humane Innovation; yet is Baptism Christ's Ordinance: so in like manner we say, is laying on of hands upon Infants, or such as have only been baptized in Infancy, a meer Popish Rite, and Innovation: yet Laying on of hands upon baptized Believers as such, is an Ordinance of Christ, as divers worthy Men have clearly proved from God's Word. And tho the Antient Fathers and Councils he speaks of, together with those of the Church of *Rome* and *England*, do wholly fly unto *Tradition*, to prove their practice of Laying on of hands upon Children; this will no more weaken our practice of Laying on of hands upon baptized Believers, than their flying to Tradition, and Usage of the Church, to prove their Infants Baptism, weakens our practice of baptizing Believers.

Moreover, those of the false Church, who wholly make use of Tradition to prove their *Pedobaptism*, might without doubt, had God been pleased to open their eyes, seen that Baptism was a Divine Institution practised by the Apostles; even so might they also have easily seen, that that Laying on of hands practised by the Apostles next after Baptism, was Christ's holy Appointment; tho they could not find their ridiculous

Rite, and Popish Ceremony of Confirming Children so to be, there being not the least Word of God for it.

But from what our Opponents say of Authors, I observe, that in the Antichristian Church, ever since the Apostacy from the good old way of the Gospel, there has been somewhat practised and kept up in the room and imitation of that Laying on of hands (instituted by Christ, and practised by the Apostles) upon baptized Believers as such, and as necessary to Church-Communion, as well as they have kept up something they call Baptism, in imitation of the true Baptism. And 'tis evident, that as the Romish Church has abominably corrupted the Ordinance of Baptism as to the Subject and Manner of Administration, and added many ridiculous, and superstitious Fopperies to it; even so they have done by Laying on of hands: *The Silver is become dross, and the Wine mixed with Water*, Isa. 1. 22. *He shall (saith Daniel) think to change Times and Laws* (speaking of the little Horn) *and they shall be given into his hand, &c. Chap. 7. 25.*

But to proceed, do our Brethren utterly detect all those impious Forgeries and Ceremonies used in Baptism, and contended for by those Fathers, Councils, and corrupt Churches they speak of, and so clearly witness against them, for changing the Subject, and Manner of Baptizing; and yet all the while hold for Baptism it self, and faithfully contend for it; yea and conclude too, notwithstanding those Abuses, and Corruptions by the Antients, and in the false Church, Baptism all along was maintained? this I say, rather confirms and

and proves the thing it self to be an Ordinance of Jesus Christ than otherwise (tho not as they perform and practise it) why cannot they do the like concerning that *Rite* of Popish Confirmation? We do detect and abominate all those superstitious Ceremonies used by them, and witness against them for *changing of the Subject, viz.* from baptized *Believers* to sprinkled *Infants*, or such as were rantised in their Infancy; and yet contend for the thing it self, as practised in the Apostles time: and little reason they have to blame us herein; since the work of Reformation, or to labour to reduce Ordinances to their primitive Purity and Lustre, is by all accounted a glorious Work; yea, and it is a full and compleat Reformation we all long for, not only for one Ordinance to be restored and refined from the dross, and abominable filth of Popish Traditions, but every Appointment and Ordinance of Christ.

Mr. *Danvers*, p. 30. (having given us an account how Laying on of hands, or Confirmation, has been asserted and practised,

By the Antients;

By Councils;

By the Church of *Rome*;

By the Church of *England*;

By some of the *Independent*, and *Presbyterian* Perswasion;

And Lastly, By some of the Baptized Churches) He comes to examine upon what ground such a great Ordinance has been, and is enjoined.

Reply. Doubtless it concerns us all to see what ground, or Scripture-warrant we have for whatever we do, or is done in the Worship and Ser-

vice of God; and as to Confirmation or Laying on of hands, as asserted and practised by some he speaks of, I marvel not that they leave the Scripture, and fly to Tradition: For first, as to that which the Popish Church calls an Ordinance of Jesus Christ, 'tis so blasphemous and ridiculous (as he well observes) that the very naming of the particulars thereof may fully detect the folly and impiety of it; whether respecting the Name, which is called *Chrism*, *Unction*, *Perfection*, &c. or the Nature, which is done by putting the sign of the Cross, with the Bishop's finger, in the forehead of the Confirmed, with these words: *I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and with the Chrism of Salvation, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*; the Party being in a white Garment, his Head bound with Linen, his Hair cut, and attended with Gossips, or Sureties; this is (saith Mr. *Danvers*) what several Popes and Councils have by their Canons and Decrees determined, and enjoined as the great Sacrament of *Confirmation*, pag. 3.

Reply. Well might *Hommius* tell us, that it is not only contrary to the Scriptures, but Blasphemous and Idolatrous, and the vain Invention of superstitious Men. And well might *Tilenus* call it, an Excrement of Antichrist: And *Amesius* say, the reasons given for the same by the Papists; are both empty, and vain; and Mr. *Calvin* cry out against it, as is minded by Mr. *Danvers*. To which I might add a passage out of a Treatise of Mr. *Hanmer*, a *Presbyterian*, who tho very clear as touching Laying on of hands upon Adult Persons Baptized before they are admitted to the Lord's

Lord's Table, yet cries down the Papists practice herein in respect of manner and form; they use (saith he) anointing with *Chrysm*, a compound of Oil and Balsam, consecrated by the Bishop; which as it was never instituted by Christ nor his Apostles, so saith he (as some affirm) it had its original from *Calixtus* Bishop of Rome, Anno 218, who ordained Confirmation to be performed with *Chrysm*, which before was done with imposition of hands without *Chrysm*. And further he speaks of the form, which (saith he) they make to lie in these words: *Consigno te signo Crucis, & confirmo te Chrysmate salutis, in nomine Patris, & Filii, & Spiritus Sancti: I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and confirm thee with the Chrysm of Salvation, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; A meer humane invention and device (saith Mr. Hammer) that has not the least shadow for it from the Scripture* *.

Also another exception he brings against the Popish way of Laying on of hands, viz. in respect of the Subject, they confirming Infants, when according to the Apostolical Institution it belongs only to such as are Adult. And it appears that Calvin from hence bore his witness against Confirmation, viz. in respect of the abuse and corruption of it, as appears in his *Institut. lib. 4. cap. 19*. To which agrees the Testimony of *Chemnitius*: Our Men (saith he) have often shewed, that the Rite of Confirmation, is the unprofitable superstition.

* See Mr. Hammer on Confirmation the ancient way of completing Church-Members, pag. 45.

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tious Traditions, and such as are repugnant to the Scripture, were removed, may piously be used to the edification of the Church, according to the consent of the Scripture. Exercitat. upon Confirm. pag. 65.

That Calvin owned Confirmation, or Laying on of hands, to be a Divine Institution, take his own words: *Nam neq; satis pro sua utilitate commendari potest sanctum hoc Institutum, nec Papista satis exprobari tam flagitiosa Corruptela, quod illud in pueriles vertendo Ineptias, non modo sustulerunt e medio, sed eo quoque ad impura & impia Superstitionis prae-textum turpiter sunt abusi.* For neither can this holy Institution (saith he) be enough commended for its Utility, nor the Papists be sufficiently upbraided with their so flagitious corruption of it, that by turning of it into childish Fopperies, they have not only taken it away, but have also so far shamefully abused it, for a colour of an impure and impious Superstition. And further he saith: *Adulterinam enim illam Confirmationem, quam in ejus locum surrogarunt, instar Meretricis, magno Ceremoniarum splendore, multisq; pomparum fucis, sine modo ornant.* For they do beyond measure deck that Adulterous Confirmation, which they have substituted in its room, like a Harlot, with great splendor of Ceremonies. If therefore (saith that worthy Author in his said Exercitat. p. 51.) Confirmation shall be drained from these mixtures of humane Inventions that have for a long time so defaced and deformed it, viz. not called it a Sacrament; if their Popish matter (both remota, and proxima) of anointing with consecrated Chrysm the forehead of the Confirmed in the form of a Cross, be removed;
† if

if neither Infants nor Children, who are not yet arrived to years of discretion, be admitted, but such as are Adult, who are able to give an account of their Faith, and the work of Grace upon their hearts; finally if those feigned Effects, mentioned by them as the end and use of it, together with those idle Additions that have betided it in the declining times of the Church, be rejected and cast off; and if done only with Prayer and Laying on of hands, for the admission of Persons as full Members, to the enjoyment of all Church-Privileges, as most agreeable to that of the Apostolical and primitive times; it will (saith he) I conceive be found to be exceeding useful and advantageous, as a thing requisite, if not necessary to a right Reformation, and the reducing of the Churches of Christ to their native beauty, and primitive purest state and constitution, &c.

And that it might appear it was not only his own Judgment, together with Calvin, and Chemnitius, he produceth several other eminent Lights of the Reformed Churches, viz. Peter Martyr, the Divines of Leyden, Pareus, Rivet, Peter du Moulin, Didoclavins, as all witnessing to Laying on of hands upon the Baptized as such, as an Apostolical Institution, and that which ought to be practised by the Churches of Christ, being refined from all Popish Corruptions and Additions, as the best Expedient, and readiest way to a happy Reformation, according to the primitive Pattern. To which I might add Mr. Caryl, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Ralph Venning, and Mr. G. Hughes, who all speak the same things concerning Confirmation,

as

Laying on of Hands

*Independents
and Presbyterians
clear touching
laying on of
hands, as re-
fined from Popish
Pollutions,*

as may be seen in their Epistles to the forementioned Book of Mr. *Hammers*, in commendation, and approbation thereof: and indeed to see how clear they be in their understandings concerning this Ordinance of Laying on of hands, and how learnedly and judiciously they have laboured to recover it from those Popish Mixtures, and cursed Pollutions of the Romish Church, hath been of a refreshing nature unto me; tho I can't but admire in the meanwhile, they should still remain so blind and dark concerning Baptism, not perceiving how that also hath been as vilely corrupted and changed from the Apostolical Institution, in respect of the Subject and Manner of Administration, as well as in regard of those idle and ridiculous Forgeries and Additions of Chrysm, Consignations, Albes, Salt, Spittle, Sureties, &c. which they witness against. Now were but their eyes so opened as to recover and drain Baptism from Popish Corruptions or Alterations upon this account also, how would it add to the beauty and perfection of their Confirmation and Reformation, (provided according to their Light they would also get into the practice of both) and what glorious Churches might they soon come to be, yea excel many of the baptized Congregations in respect of the plain Form, Order, and Constitution of the House of God according to the primitive Pattern? But to proceed, there are few, or none as I can gather, do oppose this Ordinance save some of the Baptists, of which Mr.

Danvers

Danvers may be reckoned the chief; for besides these modern Writers, already mentioned, who speak so fully concerning Laying on of hands with prayer to God for more of his Holy Spirit of Promise, and as an orderly admission unto Church-Communion, the persuasion or judgment of the Assembly of *Presbyters* concerning this Ordinance, I might also produce how clearly they agree with the forementioned Presbyterian and Independent Ministers herein, as you may see in their Annotations on *Heb. 6.*

But no more of this at present, lest we too far digress from the matter in hand; what we have here said, is in answer to *Mr. Danvers*, in respect of the Rite it self, or thing called Confirmation, and how to be rejected (as we have a cloud of Witnesses agreeing with us herein) and how to be maintained, owned, and practised by the Churches of Christ.

I shall now return to *Mr. Danvers*, pag. 32. he having in pag. 31. shewed us how blasphemous and abominable a thing the Rite of Confirmation is, as asserted by the Antients, and Decrees of General Councils, and practised by corrupt Churches; in the next place he comes to enquire what Credit or Authority the Fathers or Doctors are of that witness to it, whose Authority he labours to disprove, calling them suborned Witnesses, and Knights of the Post.

Those of the Antients he cites.

C H A P. III.

Shewing who the Antients are, and of their Credit and Authority who have born witness to Laying on of Hands.

Admit we grant what Mr. Danvers speaks concerning *Dionysius the Areopagite*, and the Decretal Epistles of the first Popes, to be impious Lies and Forgeries, shall we therefore conclude they are all suborned Witnesses, viz. the Antients who have written concerning Laying on of Hands? Surely many of the Fathers who have born witness thereunto, are generally received, and their Authority approved as the best of human Writers: What say you to *Tertullian*, shall we call him a Knight of the Post? Take his Testimony: (*A. D. 2co. de Bapt. c. 6.*) *Manus impositur per benedictionem, advocans & invitans Spiritum Sanctum; tunc ille Sanctissimus Spiritus super emundata, & benedicta Corpora, libens à Patre descendit.* After Baptism the Hand is imposed by Blessing, and calling and inviting of the Holy Spirit, who willingly descends from the Father on the Bodies that are cleansed and blessed. Moreover he saith: It is the fleshly, or outward act of Baptism, that we are dipt in water; the spiritual effects, that we are freed from our Sins: Then follows Laying on of hands, the Dispenser inviting the

Tertul. de
Bapt. ad
Quintil.
cap. 8.

the Spirit of God by Prayer. And being cleansed by Baptismal Water (saith he) we are disposed for the Holy Spirit, under the Hands of the Angel of the Church. And further, speaking concerning the happy state of the Church in this day, he saith, (*de Script. cap. 36.*) *She believeth in God, she signs with Water (that is, baptizeth) she clothes with the Spirit, (viz. by Imposition of hands) she feeds with the Eucharist, and exhorts to Martyrdom; and against this Order or Institution she receives no Man.*

Another Witness I shall call in, shall be *Eusebius* (not the Pope of that Name) but *Eusebius Pamphilus*, who lived in the time of *Constantinus Magnus* the Emperor, about three hundred Years after Christ; he certifies fully to our purpose, (*lib. 7. c. 2.*) that the *antient manner* of receiving Members into the Church, was with Prayer, and Laying on of hands. Doubtless by calling it the antient manner, he must needs refer to the Apostles time.

Again, *Eusebius* declareth, (*lib. 6. c. 26.*) That one *Novatus* being sick was baptized, if it may be called a Baptism (saith he) which he received, for he obtained not after his recovery that which he should have done by the Canon of the Church, to wit Confirmation by the Hands of the Bishop; which having not obtained, how can he be supposed to have received the Holy Spirit? This was about the Year 260. 'Tis also to be noted, that in neither of those places, nor any where else in *Eusebius*, is the least mention made of Crossing, or Chrysm, in the administration of this Ordinance.

A. D. 250.

Cyprian. Ep.
ad Iubar.

73.

Cyprian shall be the next, whom none I suppose take for a suborned Witness: having urged that of the Apostles going to Samaria, to impose Hands on those that Philip had baptized, (saith he) which Custom is also descended to us, that they who are baptized, might be brought by the Rulers of the Church, and by Prayer, and Imposition of Hands obtain the Holy Ghost. Again saith St. Cyprian, (Ep. ad Steph. de Hæreticis, Ep. 72.) It is of no purpose to lay Hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit, unless they receive the Baptism of the Church. I might produce Origen, in his 7th Homily upon Ezekiel, who speaks concerning it.

Also Hierom, who answers this Question, viz. Why he that is baptized in the Church, doth not receive the Holy Ghost, but by Imposition of hands, saith he (Dial. ad Lucifer.) This Observation for the honour of the Priesthood, did descend from the Scriptures; If you ask me where it is written? 'tis answered, in *Actibus Apostolorum*, in the *Acts of the Apostles*.

Ambrose is cited by Mr. Danvers himself; with Augustin, and others, whose Authority is not questioned: To which I might add Chrysostom, Theodoret, &c. Several others, yea many might be produced, besides those he calls suborned Witnesses; and yet have we far better Authors and Witnesses to defend this sacred Truth; for we have the Authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, 'tis left on record amongst the first Principles of his Doctrine; we have the Testimony of the Apostles Peter and John; and one not inferior to them,

them, viz. blessed St. Paul, (*Heb. 5. 12. and 6. 1, 2.*) as hath, and shall (God assisting) be made further evident: And upon no better Authority, I must confess, is this sacred Ordinance imposed upon us.

But now to speak more directly to Mr. *Danvers*, what he insists on in pag. 33. about the Rite of Confirmation, as practised in the Church of Rome, and as corrupted from the pure Institution, we readily grant it is of no better Authority than Infants Baptism. And as touching what he speaks of *Rivet*, (*Controv. Tom. 2. Exercit. p. 44.*) that it was neither instituted by Christ, nor his Apostles, 'tis spoken with respect of the Popish manner with *Chrysm*, and other ridiculous Ceremonies, which was before done with Prayer and Imposition of hands without *Chrysm*: They did, saith Mr. *Baxter*, make haste to corrupt it; they quickly introduced the Crosses, and *Chrysm*; but from the beginning it was not so. And as to what he says concerning *Ambrose*, *Jerom*, *Augustin*, and some others, it is granted, they lived in those times when the Church was adulterated, and the holy Appointments of Christ corrupted, and changed from their primitive purity; yet this makes no more against the holy Ordinance of Laying on of hands, than it doth against Baptism, and the Supper of our Lord, &c. as I have already shewed. All that Mr. *Danvers* hath said hitherto of Tradition, and Fathers, makes only against the Church of Rome and England, and others who have drunk of the Whores Cup; those things which they cry up for Apostolical Traditions, are nought else save meer human In-

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novations, and cursed Inventions of corrupt Men. I shall close this with a passage of Dr. *Jer. Taylor*, who treating about Laying on of hands upon baptized Persons as such, saith, *This was antient, and long before Popery entred into the World; and that this Rite has been more abused by Popery than by any thing.* As to what Mr. *Danvers* speaks of the *Waldenses*, that the true ones were against Imposition of hands; if that be true, yet it must be understood of the Popish Confirmation, which they disowned as a Sacrament, accompanied with Ceremonies; for so I find they express themselves: Such a Confirmation, I grant, they witness against, as being none of Christ's Institution, but introduced by the Devil's Instigation; 'twas the corruption of it, and not the thing it self, doubtless they witness against: but that they owned not Laying on of hands at all after Baptism, before admission was granted to the Lord's Table, I judg too hard for any to make appear. But if they were ignorant of this Truth, 'tis no marvel, considering the Day they lived in.

Object. If it be objected, they with other Churches and People he mentions, were much enlightened into the Truths of the Gospel.

Ans. That is no good Argument, since glorious Reformers, and eminent enlightened Souls, may notwithstanding lie short of some Institution of the Almighty, as appears both in the Old and New Testament: What glorious Light had *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, and many others of the Godly Kings and Prophets in *Juda*? And yet one thing plainly laid down in the Book of the Law, they were short in, nay, as some judg, they

they did not see it, viz. sitting in Booths in the Feast of the 7th Month; of which we read in *Nehem.* 8. 13, 14. They found written (saith the Text) in the Law which God commanded by Moses, that the Children of Israel should dwell in Booths, in the Feast of the seventh Month. *Verf.* 15. And all the Congregation of them, that were come again out of Captivity, made Booths, and sate under the Booths: For since the days of Joshua the Son of Nun, unto that day, had not the Children of Israel done so; and there was very great gladness, verse 47.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing upon what ground some of the Independent and Presbyterian Perswasion have asserted Laying on of hands on baptised Persons.

IN Pag. 36. Mr. *Danvers* having done with Tradition and Fathers, he tells us, he will consider the Scripture-grounds urged in proof hereof by the Independents, and those of the Presbyterian Perswasion; In the first place (which is the principal) *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. which he saith, Mr. *Hanmer* modestly expresses to be but a probable ground.

To which I shall give this answer, that tho Mr. *Hanmer* uses such a Phrase (viz. calling *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. a probable ground) he doth not say, 'tis but

but a probable ground; and those that read his Book shall find, that by the Testimony of divers famous Men, he abundantly endeavours to prove it to be absolutely the Laying on of hands intended in that Scripture. (See Page 25, 26.) And since I find many eminent Men speaking so plainly on this account of *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* and to satisfy some Persons herein, and prevent mistakes, take a few instances out of Mr. *Hanmer*, as the Judgment of several Divines upon that Text.

The first I shall cite is *Didoclavius*, who of three Interpretations of this Text, mentioned by him, admits of this, *Cap. 2. viz. Laying on of hands after Baptism, and before admitted to the Lord's Table*: And gives a reason why it may be called Confirmatory; *Nempe ratione Ecclesie approbantis, & confirmantis sua approbatione examinatum, ad verum illud ac genuinum Confirmationis Sacramentum admittentis*: (*viz.*) Because of the Churches approving, and by their approbation confirming of the Person examined; and admitting him unto that true and genuine Rite of Confirmation.

The next is *Major* on *Heb. 6. 2.* On this place (saith he) all that I have seen (mark) understand it of Imposition of hands on such as have been baptized only. *Bullinger*.

Mr. Hooker, *Lib. 5. Sect. 6.* in his Appendix, *Pag. 3.* alledging *T. C.* thus speaking, Tell me, why there should be any such Confirmation, seeing no one Tittle thereof can be found in Scripture? Thus answers ironically, except the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 6. 2. be Scripture; plainly intimating (saith Mr. *Hanmer*) he thought that place to

to be a sufficient ground for it, and that to be the meaning of the Apostle there.

Mr. Parker, *de Polit. Eccles. lib. 3. c. 15, 16.* refuting the Arguments of such as plead for Episcopal Confirmation, at large assents (saith our Author) to what is by me delivered.

First, "He shews the general nature, and end of it; viz. admission of Members into the Communion of the Church, which accordingly was used towards such as were converted. This Imposition of hands (saith he) *Heb. 6.2.* is that very Ecclesiastical Union, by a solemn professing of Faith, and admission into the Church.

Secondly, "He shews the necessity of it from this Text, *Heb. 6.2.* (saith Mr. Hammer.)

Thirdly, That it ought to be done publickly, and before the Church: *Et hic ordo inter gravia negotia agitur, enim de membrorum recipiendo, publicum hoc est, & publici juris, & ideo non nisi Ecclesie consensu ejusdem, cui adjungendus est competens, perficiendus.* This course is to be reckoned among the weighty affairs, it is a publick thing, and of publick right; for the matter in agitation is concerning the receiving of a Member, and therefore not to be performed without the consent of that same Church, to which the Competent is to be joined.

Fourthly, "He shews the Antiquity thereof, and that 'tis an Apostolical Institution, and the practice of the Antient Church.

He further affirms, *pag. 28.* that *Piscator* so understood *Heb. 6. 1, 2. viz.* to mean Laying on of hands upon the Baptized; Also *Beza, Pareus,* and

and River, whose words take as follows *m.*
positio manuum, cujus mentio fit, Heb. 6. 2. re-
ferenda est ad solennem Baptizatorum Benedictio-
nem, quæ à Pastoribus solebat fieri, eos in Christi-
anismi vocationis confirmantibus: Imposition of
hands, whereof mention is made Heb. 6. 2. is to
be referred to the solemn Benediction of the Bapti-
zed, which was used to be performed by the Pastors,
confirming them in the calling of Christianity. He
mentions the Doctors of Leyden, shewing this
to be their sense upon this Text also.

Calvin, who gives this only as the chief thing intended by the Apostle in this place, from hence draws this remarkable Inference; wherein (saith Mr. Hammer) he plainly declares his apprehensions concerning the Original and Antiquity of this practice in the Church of Christ: *Hic unus locus, &c. This one place (saith he) abundantly testifies that the-original of this Ceremony, viz. Confirmation, or Laying on of hands, flow'd from the Apostles, which yet afterwards was turned into a Superstition; as the World almost always degenerates from the best Institutions into Corruption: Wherefore to this day this pure Institution [mark] ought to be retained, but the Superstition to be corrected. Why should Mr. Danvers presume to say these Men confess the Scripture is but a probable ground, and that Tradition and Antiquity is the more certain? And again "that there is nothing but a faint insinuation from the Scripture to ground Laying on of hands upon? What Men can speak more fully to a Text?*

But to proceed, he adds *Hyperus*, who saith, *Imposition of hands*, Heb. 6. 2. was in the confirmation of those that had been baptized and rightly instructed, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. He urgeth several other Persons of the same mind, as *Illyricus*, Mr. *Doering*, &c.

To which I might add what Mr. *Hughes* late of *Plymouth* in his Ep. to Mr. *Hammer's* Book, mentions on this account, speaking of Heb. 6. 2. It is by some glorious Lights in the Church (saith he) understood of Confirmation, in that Phrase of *Imposition of hands*, annexed to Baptism, Heb. 6. Whence it is said, that this abundantly testifies that the Original of this Ceremony flowed from the Apostles.

Before I proceed, I might cite a passage full to the same purpose, as the Judgment of the Learned Assembly of Divines, which take as follows, out of their Annotations on Heb. 6. 2. *Laying on of hands*, say they, is usually called Confirmation; which stood first, in examining those that had been baptized what progress they had made in Christianity. Secondly, In praying for them, that God would continue them in the Faith, and give them more Grace, strengthening them by his Holy Spirit, they laid their hands upon them: whence the Apostolical Constitution was called *Laying on of Hands*.

Moreover, What Mr. *Baxter* speaks upon this account I can't well omit; *Confirmat.* p. 124, 125. If the Universal Church of Christ (saith he) have used Prayer, and *Laying on of hands*, as a practice received from the Apostles, and no other beginning of it can be found; then we have no reason to think this Ceremony ceased, or to interpret the foresaid

Scripture contrary to this practice of the Universal Church. But the Antecedent is true, ergo. And if any say, Anointing and Crossing were antient; I answer (saith he)

First, That they were as antient in the Popish use as the matter of a Sacrament, or necessary Signs, is not true, nor proved, but frequently disproved by our Writers against Popish Confirmation.

Secondly, Nor can it be proved, that they were as antient as indifferent things.

Thirdly, We prove the contrary, because they were not in Scripture-times, there being no mention of them.

Fourthly, So that we bring Antiquity but to prove the continuance of a Scripture-practice, and so to clear the practice of it: But the Papists plead Fathers for that which the Scripture is a stranger unto.

I shall close this with Reverend Mr. Hooker: The antient Custom of the Church (saith he, Eccles. Polit. p. 351.) was, after they had baptized, to add thereto Imposition of hands, with effectual Prayer for the illumination of God's most Holy Spirit, to confirm and perfect that which the Grace of the said Spirit had already begun in Baptism: for the means to obtain the Graces which God doth bestow, are our Prayers; and our Prayers to that intent are available as well for others as for our selves.

But to pass by this, I intreat the Reader to consider, that tho we have urged the Testimony of several Authors, who are one with us in the main concerning our Practice herein, yet we build not upon

upon Men or Tradition, but on the Word of God ; neither do we suppose any necessity for us to take up new weapons to defend so plain a Truth, since our Adversaries have been so sufficiently worsted and put to flight by the Sword of the Spirit, as used by several eminent Saints in times past. What we have mentioned of Authors, we have been in part forced to by what Mr. *Danvers* and others have said of them. And that leads me to what he speaks, *pag. 40.* of the Scripture-grounds on which the Baptists have asserted this Rite (as he calls it) and founded this Practice of Laying on of hands upon baptized Believers, as necessary to Church-Communion, *as before especially held forth, Heb. 6. 1, 2. tho not affirmed with that sobriety and modesty, as the other from Probability, but rather Infallibility, denying fellowship to any that do not receive it, &c.*

CHAP. V.

Shewing how, and upon what ground the Baptized Churches do assert Laying on of hands.

HOW those learned Persons he speaks of have writ and asserted Laying on of hands from that Text, I shall leave to the judicious Reader, by considering the Instances forecited ; and that they hold it also as necessary to Church-Communion, might I presume be made manifest, but that is not our present work, but rather to make the thing it self appear to be an Ordinance of

Jesus Christ; and in order to this, those two Particulars, or Principles Mr. *Danvers* lays down we will consider, viz.

First, That to every Ordinance of Christ there must be some plain positive word of Institution to confirm it; and not only human Tradition, or far-fetcht Consequences and Inferences, such as the many Volumes written of Circumcision, and federal Holiness, to assert Infants Baptism to be an Ordinance of Christ, which no ordinary Capacity can reach, and only Men of Parts and Abilities can trace, and follow in their Meanders.

Secondly, That to practise anything in the Worship of God for an Ordinance of his, without an Institution, is Will-worship and Superstition, &c.

Ans. The great Text urged for this Institution, he says, is *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptisms, Laying on of hands, &c.

This is the Text affirmed, saith he, to be the great Charter of the Church, for this point of Faith and Practice; but how to find the least warrant for the same there, he says we see not: If it was indeed said, let all baptized Believers have hands laid upon them, with as much plainness, as let all Believers be baptized, *Mat. 28. 29.* *Acts 10. 43.* or, let all baptized Believers eat the Lord's Supper, *1 Cor. 11. 24.* *Acts 2. 41.* it was something to the purpose.

Ans. First, we grant that to every Ordinance of Christ there must be some word of Institution,

stitution, and that such far-fetcht Consequence, as he minds, will not do, or be sufficient: but that every Institution must be laid down in such plain positive Words, as he seems to affirm, viz. *Let all baptized Believers have Hands laid upon them*, I deny, it being none of our Principle I judg, nor theirs neither; since they practise such things as Institutions of Christ, which are nowhere in so many plain positive words commanded, as may hereafter be shewed.

But as to the other thing he minds, we do agree with him in that matter, and say, Whatsoever is done in the Worship and Service of God, without an Institution, is Will-worship; and you shall see that our Principles agree and comport with all those honest Protestant Principles concerning what we have to say further about Laying on of hands, &c.

But to reply to what he says concerning *Heb. 6.* it matters not whether it be *Heb. 5. 12.* or *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* or *Acts 8. 16, 17.* or *Acts 19. 6.* or any other Scripture, that is the chief Text urged to prove Laying on of hands an Ordinance and Institution of Jesus Christ; provided that the Scripture urged on this account, will prove it so to be. But whereas he says he finds not the least warrant for the same, I somewhat marvel at it, considering what has been formerly written, and proved from that Text, by several worthy and able Men, whose Books he, nor none else have ever yet answered. But it seems he would have it said in so many plain words, *Let all baptized Believers have hands laid upon them*, or else all is just nothing that is asserted.

But is it in *Mat.* 28. 19. or *Acts* 10. 48. said in so many plain words, Let all Believers be baptized? 'tis not so read in my Bible. Nay, and I affirm, that from *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. none can prove that all Believers ought to be baptized in Water, without making use of some Inference, or some other Text of Scripture to prove it, for as much as Water is not exprest or mentioned there. Suppose a *Quaker* should tell you, the Apostles had power given them to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and that Christ commanded them to baptize all those that were taught, or disciplined, with the Spirit, and that it intends not Water in the least; what would you say or do to refute him? Do you think you should not need some Consequence or other, or help from some other Scripture, to prove 'tis Water which is intended there?

But again, secondly; Is it said in *1 Cor.* 11. 24. in so many plain words, Let all Believers eat the Lord's Supper, or in *Acts* 2. 41, 42? The *Pedobaptists* say, how can you prove by so many plain words, that Women received the Lord's Supper? I grant 'tis easy to prove they did, yet when they demand such plain Texts for it, how do you answer them? is it not by Inferences? And I see not how such Answers do in the least betray the truth, or the justice of our Cause; as do not our Answers to such Queries so usually brought by those that assert *Pedobaptism* confute us, as you are pleased to say p. 54. for we are not in the least against drawing of Inferences, or natural Consequences from the Scripture. And would not you allow any *Pedobaptist* to urge a
Text

Text of Scripture, and infer what he will from it for his Practice, provided it may naturally be infer'd or drawn from the Premises or Text he brings? surely you, as well as we, will readily give him that liberty. But when Men shall mention Scriptures to prove their Principles or Practice by, and infer this or that from them, to the palpable wronging and wresting of the Text, it being as far from the intent of the Spirit of God therein as the East is from the West, as the Consequences and Inferences brought from Circumcision, and federal Holiness, to prove Infants Baptism; they are such kind of Inferences we declare against. But we need not trouble our selves with things of this nature, having the holy Scriptures so plain for our Practice, as *Acts 8. 17. Acts 19. 6. and Heb. 6. 1, 2.* where it is called a Foundation-Principle of the Doctrine of Christ.

To this he says in p. 42, by way of Concession, *That Laying on of hands is a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ.* But then he says, *It must be such a Laying on of hands as is somewhere taught or practised; but such a Laying on of hands upon all baptized Believers, we find no where taught or practised: Jesus Christ had no hands laid upon him by John Baptist, after he baptized him; neither did he give one word of it in his Commission upon his Ascension; neither do we read that the Church of the Hebrews practised any such thing; for there is no mention that the 120 had Hands laid on them, nor the 3000 in Acts 2. or 5000 in Acts 4. after their Baptism, before they broke Bread; neither do we find the least of it in any other Churches in the New Testament; neither in Samaria by Philip, nor*

Corinth, Philippi, Colossia, Thessalonica, Rome, the Churches of Galatia, the Churches in Asia, Smyrna, Thyatira, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, no nor in Ephesus. It is true Paul laid his hands upon twelve of their number upon another occasion, as Peter and John did in Samaria, &c.

Ans. He has said here a great deal, and refuted us with as good Arguments as the Scotsman refuted *Bellarmin*: what is here more than meer Affirmations? he acknowledges there is a Laying on of hands which is called a Principle of Christ's Doctrine, but he says it must be such a one as is somewhere taught and practised; but he is bold to say, this never was.

Ans. Where is that Laying on of hands taught, which he affirms to be a Principle of Christ's Doctrine? Not that I question it, I believe it was taught, tho not as one of the first Oracles of God, or beginning Principles of Christ's Doctrine; yet where does he find Laying on of hands on Officers taught? let him not be too confident; for that Scripture, affirmed by him to be a full Precept for it,

* Dr. Hammond says 'tis that of Absolution.

† Confirm. & Restaurat. pag. 123.

1 Tim. 5. 22. is very doubtful * what Laying on of hands is mentioned there. Mr. † Baxter saith, Some think by it is meant Imposition of hands in Confirmation, some in Ordination, and some for Absolution.

Let all Men here consider his partiality; Is this a Precept in so many words, Lay hands on all Officers? whereas the word Officer,

Officer, or Elder, is not mentioned in the Text, or Verse, before nor after, nor elsewhere throughout that fifth Chapter: we must therefore have recourse to other Scriptures in the case of Officers, which are full Precedents for it, as *Acts* 13.3. and 6.6. as we compare *Heb.* 6.2. *Acts* 8.15, 17. and 19.6. for the clearing the Truth we contend for, comparing Scripture with Scripture.

But *secondly*, The words are rather in themselves a Caution or Prohibition than otherwise; will he call this a full Precept? the most he can assert from hence is this, that the words do imply that *Timothy* was to lay hands on some body, otherwise no room for those Expressions; but then what kind of Laying on of hands he intends is the question; whether it be only one sort, or more, from hence it may be hard to decide. May we not conclude *Paul's* Counsel to *Timothy* thus far comprehensive, *viz.* do not lay hands suddenly on any Man, neither to Office, let them first be proved, *1 Tim.* 3. 10. nor upon Persons baptized as such, they must first be taught, or instructed in the Truth they are about to practise; which may be gathered from *Mat.* 28. 20. *Heb.* 5. 12. they must be so taught, and the Truth so explained, that Persons may obey the same in Faith, and with understanding.

Thirdly, This must needs be granted on all hands, that without some Inference, or help of other Scripture, Laying on of hands for Ordination cannot be proved from this Text, which *Mr. Danvers* will not admit us to do; we must have every Principle of *Christ's* Doctrine in so many

plain words, and from Christ's own mouth too, or else 'tis no Institution.

Object. But may be, some will say, he urges other Scriptures to prove Laying on of hands on Officers, pag. 54. *Acts* 6.6. & 13.3, &c.

Ans. Granted, yet those are only brought as Examples (for so indeed they are) and not Precepts; and there is none urged by him to prove it commanded, save that we have spoken to, *1 Tim.* 5. 22. and what can be produced save clear Precedents on that account, I know not.

But now as to Imposition of hands on baptized Believers as such, we have not only clear Examples, but also the Scripture shews it was taught as a positive Command and Institution of Jesus Christ; or what was commanded by him; which I shall fully shew from *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. where the Apostle writing of the six Principles, or Foundation-Doctrines of Christ, uses the word λόγον in the 1st Verse, and διδαχῆς in the 2d Verse, that is *Word* and *Doctrine*; so this of Laying on of Hands, amongst other Principles, the Apostle there, by the Spirit of God, calls the Word and Doctrine of Christ: now the Words of Christ, and Commands of Christ, are Terms synonymous, or of the like import; as *Deut.* 10. 4. shews, where the ten Commandments are called in the margin ten Words, as most suting with the Hebrew Text. Again, *John* 14. 21. with 23. and 24. v. compared with vers. 21. further evinces it; *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:* In Vers. 23. *If any Man love me, he will keep my Words;* and in Verse 24. called Sayings: and the Word is said in *John* 7. 16. to be the Father's,

†

and

and Christ's Word said to be what he had from the Father. So now, Laying on of hands, as well as Repentance, Faith and Baptism, is the Word and Doctrine of Christ, and therefore equally to be observed and obeyed by all the Saints, being one of the Principles, or Fundamental Truths, which the *Hebrew Church*, at the Command and Word of Christ, came under the practice of, *Heb. 5. 12.* and *6. 1, 2.* Moreover this Principle is, by the said Author to the *Hebrews*, called one of the *Oracles of God*, which he tells them they had need again to be instructed in; plainly implying they had once been taught it, and were in the practice thereof. Now the *Oracles of God* are the Commands of God; see *Acts 7. 38.* where the ten Commandments are called *lively Oracles*; compared with *Rom. 3. 2.* *Unto them were committed the Oracles of God.* Methinks this might convince any dissatisfied Person, that Laying on of hands, as well as the other Principles, was taught and commanded by Jesus Christ.

But yet again, consider that what the Apostles wrote to the Churches as the Word of Christ, ought to be owned by all that are Spiritual, to be the *Commands of God*, *1 Cor. 14. 37.* But *vers. 38.* *If any will be ignorant, let him be ignorant.* Yet not withstanding what we say on this Account, still I find this Objection brought against this Appointment, *viz.*

Object. Where is Laying on of hands commanded by Christ? we find nothing of it in the Commission, *Mat. 28,*

Ans. 1. Why should you make such a stir about an expresse Command? must it be plainly laid down, or exprest in the Commission, or else no Divine Institution? Does not this make as much every way against Laying on of hands upon Officers, as against that on baptized Believers as such? We account that Man very malicious who resolves to wound his Neighbour, tho himself be wounded thereby.

2. We have as plain Precedents for Laying on of hands on baptized Believers, as we have on Officers, *Acts* 8. 16, 17. and *Acts* 19. 6. yea and more than bare Examples for it: it is called a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ; but where that on Officers is call'd so I know not: for that the Laying on of hands in *Heb.* 6. 2. cannot intend that on Officers, has been clearly proved by divers Arguments; and that it intends Laying on of hands on the Baptized for the Spirit of Promise, and to confirm them in the Faith newly received, is not only our light and apprehension, but has also been asserted to be the sense of that Text by many Antient and Modern Divines of several Perswasions, as has been shewed.

Object. But such a Laying on of hands you contend for, was no where practised; *John* did not lay hands upon Christ.

Ans. We will grant you, *John Baptist* did not lay hands on the Lord Jesus; it cannot be rationally concluded he should, considering the lesser is blessed of the greater. Baptism might be administred by *John*, it being a figure of Christ's Death, Burial, and Resurrection; but the promised Spirit, which is the end of the Ordinance

of Laying on of hands, is said to be Christ's own gift, *Eph. 4. 7.* But tho *John* laid not his hands on Christ, being not a fit Administrator thereof, yet I may say, the Father laid his hands upon him, and the Spirit came down visibly in the likeness of a Dove, and rested on him just after he came out of the Water; and this might, as many of the Learned affirm, contain the substance of this Administration contended for.

Moreover, In this way Christ Jesus was visibly sealed by God the Father after he was baptized: saith Dr. Taylor, *Confirm. p. 12.* He had another, or new Administration past upon him for the reception of the Holy Spirit, and this was done for our sakes; we also must follow that Example; and it plainly describes to us the Order of this Administration, and the Blessing designed to us; after we are baptized we need to be strengthened and confirmed. And again he saith (citing a passage of Optatus) Christ was washed when he was in the hands of John, and the Father finished what was wanting; the Heavens were opened, God the Father anointed him, the Spiritual Uction presently descended in the likeness of a Dove, and sate upon his Head, and was spread all over him when he was anointed of the Father; to whom also, lest Imposition of hands should seem to be wanting, the Voice of God was heard from the Cloud, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.* I shall leave this to consideration.

Object. But further you affirm, that Christ did not lay hands upon his Disciples.

Answer. And how do you come to know he did not? may be you will say, 'tis no where written that

that he did. But pray where do you read that the 12 Disciples, or Apostles of Christ, were baptized? Doth it follow because we read not of their Baptism, they were not baptized?

Obj. But you say, there is not one word of it in the Commission.

Ans. 1. There is not one word in the Commission, as I have shewed, concerning any Laying on of hands, yet you own that upon Officers to be a Principle of Christ's Doctrine.

2. There is not one word in the Commission concerning the Resurrection of the Dead, nor of Eternal Judgment, nor Prayer, nor Assembling together, nor other things that are undoubtedly Gospel-Truths and Institutions; yet tho they are not exprest, they are included, as those words plainly hold forth, *Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:* And surely every one may see, unless he wilfully shut his eyes, that there are many more Precepts implied in the words of the Commission than are exprest; for if nothing must be received for Gospel-Institutions but what are exprest in the Commission, you must throw away the greatest part of those Precepts you call Commands, or Appointments of Jesus Christ.

Object. But you proceed, and say, *That the Church of the Hebrews practised no such thing, for there is no mention that the hundred and twenty had hands laid upon them, nor the three thousand,* Acts 2.

Ans. That the Church of the Hebrews practised this Ordinance as well as other Churches, is plain in Heb. 6. 1, 2. As they repented, believed,
and

and were baptized, so they were under the practice of Laying on of hands: for that is a practical Ordinance all confess; *Not laying again*, saith the Author, *Repentance from dead Works*, &c. this plainly sheweth they had once laid all those Foundation-principles.

Object. *But may be, you will say, there is nothing of this signified in Acts 2. when that Church was first gathered.*

Ans^r. 'Tis very clear you are mistaken; for is it not said *Acts 2. 42. They continued in the Apostles Doctrine?* which they could not do, if they had not submitted to every Part or Precept of it; and is not Laying on of hands, as well as Baptism, and those other Principles, part thereof? 'tis called the *Apostles Doctrine, Acts 2. in Heb. 6. 2. Christ's Doctrine*; not the Apostles any other ways than they were taught it by, and received it from the Lord Jesus: and let none conclude they were not taught Laying on of hands, because not plainly exprest, or particularly laid down *Acts 2.* for we may as well conclude, the Apostle taught them not the Resurrection of the Dead, nor Eternal Judgment, since we read nothing there to that purpose: Doubtless *Philip, Acts 8.* preached Baptism to the Eunuch, how should he else cry out, *Lo here is Water, what doth hinder me from being baptized?* yet we read not one word of *Philip's* preaching of it to him. The Author to the *Hebrews* (writing to this very People) *ch. 5. 12.* tells us, *They had need to be taught again which are the first Principles of the Oracles of God*; therefore it follows clearly, they had been taught it, and had practised it, as *chap. 6. 1, 2.* proves.

Mr.

Mr. *Danvers* goes on, and affirms, that we find not the least mention of it in any of the Churches in the New Testament, neither in *Samaria* after *Philip* had baptized them, nor *Corinth*, *Philippi*, *Colossia*, *Thessalonica*, *Rome*, *Galatia*, *Smyrna*, *Thyatira*, *Pergamos*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, no nor *Ephesus*.

Answ. I cannot but admire at such affirmations: but first, as to the Church in *Samaria*, 'tis granted *Philip* did not lay hands on them after he had baptized them; he being only a *Deacon*, it might not upon that account concern, or belong to him to impose hands on them: and besides, God had other work for him to do, viz. the Conversion of the *Eunuch*. Yet most evident it is, when the Apostles and Brethren at *Jerusalem* heard that the People in *Samaria* had received the Word of God, and were baptized, rather than they should lie short of any part of their duty, especially that in which so great a Blessing is promised, they would send *Peter* and *John* to pray and lay their hands upon them; and that it was not for the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, has been clearly proved. And as to the Church at *Rome*, 'tis said plainly *Rom. 6. 17.* *That they had obeyed from the heart that Form of Doctrine delivered to them*: And what Form can the Apostle intend save that in *Heb. 6. 1, 2?* we read of no other delivered to the Saints for their obedience. And as to the Church of *Ephesus*, we read of their coming under this Ordinance when first planted, *Acts 19. 6.*

2. And now as to some other Churches he speaks of, I grant we read not of their practicing

sing this Ordinance; yet what doth this make against it? For where do we read of their Repentance or Faith, of their being baptized, or their believing the Resurrection of the Dead, or Eternal Judgment? There is nothing spoken of several Churches as to any of these other Principles; and it is very observable, that we read but of one or two Churches that practised the Lord's Supper: yet none doubt but all the Churches continued in the practice of it, God's way being the same in every Church, 1 Cor. 4. 17. If in some Scriptures it is spoken of as the duty and practice of the Saints, tho not exprest in all places, it matters not; for if what is the duty of one Believer as a Believer, be the duty of every Believer, then there is no need for the Almighty to speak of every particular Church's obedience either to Baptism, Laying on of hands, or the Lord's Supper, &c.

One thing I cannot but call over again, owned and confessed by Mr. *Danvers*, viz. *That there is a Laying on of hands reckoned amongst the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ.*

Ans. 'Tis well he will grant this; nay, and it is one of his first Teachings, he also acknowledges: then I hope he will allow us to say, Christ taught a Laying on of hands as a Foundation-principle; and if he taught it, 'twas that it might be practised as a Foundation, or beginning Truth; and then ought not all to yield obedience thereto? For as every Person is actually to repent, believe, and be baptized, so each one ought to come under the practice of Laying on of hands, it being of the same extent, nature and quality

quality with the other, and joined to them; and it cannot be said to be obeyed otherwise than by practice; as in Baptism, I do not yield obedience by believing other Persons were or ought to be baptized, but by being baptized my self. We grant that some Act done upon, or Practice done by others, may be teaching to us, tho not ingaged in our own Persons to do the same; but then it must not be such a fundamental Principle and Practice as this, being of the same nature with Repentance, Faith, and Baptism; Will it serve my turn to believe 'tis another Man's duty to repent? Surely no, I must repent and believe my self, or else I neglect my duty.

Object. And whereas he tells us in pag. 43. of other *beginning Teachings, proper for all baptized Babes.*

Ans. 1. He pretends to take the *stumbling-block out of the way of God's People*: But in this 'tis palpable he rather cast one in their way; will he make new Foundation-Principles, or call those beginning Principles of Christ's Doctrine, or of Church-Constitution, which God no where so calls? We say, such only are to be accounted beginning Principles, which God's Word declares so to be.

2. It appears as if he would make Laying on of hands for miraculous healing, to be that in *Heb. 6.* which has been fully answered again and again; they should have refuted Mr. Griffith and Mr. Rider, before they insist on this: I think it needless on that account to speak any thing to it, and shall only refer the Reader to their excellent Books for satisfaction. But this I must say, that that

that Laying on of hands for healing belongs not to Babes as such; strong Men, and Fathers may be sick, and have need of it, as well as others: besides, this sort concerns not all (no, only sick Persons) and may be practised again and again, as oft as Persons may be sick, or under bodily infirmities; but that Principle that is one of the beginning words of Christ's Doctrine, is only to be laid, or practised once, *Heb. 6. 1. Not Laying again, &c.* 2ly. Unbelievers had hands laid upon them for healing, and therefore I might also argue it appertains not unto Babes as such: Moreover, anointing with Oil is left as the Ordinance for healing in the Church.

3. Mr. *Darvers* should make a difference between what Christ taught as a Promise, or Gift to some particular Persons, and what he taught as a general Practice; that which is minded in *Mark 16.* is laid down promissory-wise to such as should have the gift of Faith, or the Faith of Miracles *, and is therefore nothing to the purpose.

4. They distinguish not between the Word or Doctrine of Christ, and Miracles, which were for the confirmation thereof, which in *Mark 16. 20.* the Spirit doth; which causeth their mistake.

But, do they not confute themselves by thus arguing? they own the Doctrine of Laying on of hands to be a Foundation-principle of Christ; but this they speak of here must needs be granted to be temporary, being for the confirmation of the Word,

* Will any say, to drink Poison, or any deadly thing, or take up Serpents, is Milk for Babes?

Word, as he himself confesseth; and every Word or Ordinance of Christ, as I have shewed, was more or less confirmed with Signs, and Wonders according to this Promise of Christ. I shall say no more to this, but proceed to his next Objection.

2. Object. Page 44. If every one of these Principles in Heb. 6. 2. are so absolutely to be taken in by Babes, and without which we are not to esteem them communicable, what do you say to the Doctrine of Baptisms, in the Text one of the Principles? must all be baptized with the Baptism of the Spirit, and of Sufferings? &c.

Ans. We answer, by distinguishing between that Baptism that is a practical Duty, and that which is taught or laid down by our Lord Jesus to be believed: that that is commanded, ought absolutely to be obeyed by every Babe; and 'tis as necessary for every Babe to believe the Doctrine of Sufferings, which Jesus Christ preached to all that would follow him and be his Disciples; this was that which he taught, *Mat. 20. 22, 23.* to the two Sons of Zebedee, that they (and consequently all God's Children) should more or less *be baptized with.* *In the World (saith Christ) you shall have tribulation, John 16. 33.* 'Tis necessary every Saint should be instructed into this, and believe this, that *through much Tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God, Acts 14. 22.* and all those who will live godly in Christ Jesus, *shall suffer persecution, 2 Tim. 3. 12.* We say not, that every one must actually forsake House, and Lands, and Life for Christ's sake, and the Gospel, or else be none of his Disciples, but be ready in holy disposition so to do when call'd to it.

And

And as to the Baptism of the Spirit, that the Spirit is promised to every true Believer, see *Joel* 2. 28, 29. which *Peter* (*Acts* 2. 17. compared with *vers.* 38, 39.) applies indefinitely to all penitent baptized Persons, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, as their Right by promise of the Father to receive; and not to them of that Generation only, but also to such as should repent, and be baptized in all succeeding Ages; this Promise is one and the same with that in *John* 7. 38. called *Rivers of Water*, implying fillings.

* with the Spirit. In *Acts* 2. 38.

'tis said to be the Gift of the Holy Spirit. In *Acts* 11. 17. like Gifts.

In *Acts* 8. 15. the Holy Spirit: which the Apostles in the belief of the promise, *Joel* 2. and *Joh.* 14. 16.

Acts 2. 38, prayed for. From which Scriptures it appears, that all Believers are under the like Promises of the Holy Ghost, on like terms of Repentance, Faith, &c. And according to the measure of Faith given us by Christ, may our fillings with the Holy Spirit be.

* Fillings with the Spirit may be taken in a comparative sense, God giving more or greater measures of it in the New Testament dispensation, &c. since the Ascension of Christ, than before.

And thus it is the duty of every Disciple to believe he shall receive, or be baptized with the Spirit, (according as the Will of the same Spirit is, that divides to every Man the particular measures thereof) having the Promise of a faithful and never-failing God to rely upon; provided he go on in his Obedience, as directed in the blessed Word, for the attaining of it.

Object.

Object. But if it be objected, none are baptized with the Holy Spirit, but such as receive it visibly, and in its extraordinary Gifts.

Ans. 1. Suppose none are so baptized now, yet all the Saints are to believe the Promise of the Spirit, and do receive it too; and doth not God perform his Promise, because none so receive the Spirit, viz. to be baptiz'd therewith? 1 Cor. 12. 13.

2. All are to believe the Baptism of the Spirit was given in the Apostles days to confirm the Gospel or Word of Christ. And 'tis to be observed, that *Paul* to the *Ephesians* (on whom he had imposed hands, *Acts* 19. 6. and they spake with Tongues, and prophesied) takes no notice of those visible Gifts, but saith, *In whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, Eph. 1. 13.* plainly shewing 'tis the great Benefit received, and enjoyed by Believers, to be sealed by the Spirit: 'tis not matter of rejoicing to work Miracles, as 'tis to know *our Names are written in Heaven.* And thus we have explained the Doctrine of Baptisms.

Now to what he says in the 3d place, p. 45. That the *Laying on of hands*, *Heb. 6. 2.* may respect the *Laying on of hands upon the Ministry* for their solemn Investiture into their Office, whether *Deacons, Elders, or Messengers*, which he says is necessary to be taught, known, and understood by all, tho all are not commanded into the personal practice of it, for all are not *Prophets, Apostles, Teachers*; and 'tis most remarkable, that the Doctrine, or teaching of *Laying on of hands*, is all that is mentioned in this Scripture; all baptized Believers

must

must be taught it, that's plain, but that they are obliged therefore to practise it, is not here or elsewhere to be found.

Ans. Before I give a further Answer to this grand Objection, I can't but observe how he mistakes the Text, *i. e.* than the Doctrine, or teaching of Laying on of hands only is mentioned in this Scripture; why does he speak thus of Imposition of hands only? may he not as well speak so concerning Repentance, Faith, and Baptism, as of this Principle? *i. e.* they also are necessary only to be taught and known by all, and none concern'd in the personal practice of them? Would any judg this Good Divinity? What reason can he give, seeing all the four are practical Ordinances, that the three first should be taught so as to be personally practis'd by all, and the other only to be believ'd? Tho what he says here has already been fully answer'd, yet I shall examin this Text further, and make it evident, that the Laying on of hands in this Text cannot intend or be meant that upen Church-Officers, but must mean that fort now contended for; and I am more willing to speak further to this Objection, because this being answered, our work is done.

1. Mind that the Apostle is speaking only here of the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ; are they not so called? *i. e.* *Doctrina Christiana Initia, seu Rudimenta*; the Beginnings or Rudiments of Christian Doctrine: Or, as Beza, *Prima Christianismi Principia*; the first Principles of Christianity. Now Laying on of hands on Officers, is not a beginning Principle, nor of the Alphabet of the Christian Religion, I think they will

will not affirm it so to be. May not a Church, or People, profess and practise the first or beginning Principles of Religion, and proceed very far in the way of Christianity, and yet have no Officers orderly ordained amongst them?

But 2. These Principles appertain to the Foundation of God's House, being such on which the House is built; they are all equal in kind, nature, and quality, and one not to be without the other, God having joined them together as all of one rank, for the bearing up this Spiritual Fa-brick, see *vers.* 1. But laying on of hands on Officers, is an Ordinance of another rank and nature; a Church must be first gathered, or constituted, and Persons make a considerable progress in the Profession of Religion, before they can orderly be chosen, or ordained to the Office of Elders or Deacons: In short, Officers are not for the being, but well-being of the Church; and therefore such a Laying on of hands cannot be intended here. We read of Churches who had no Officers amongst them, *Tit.* 1. 5, 6. If a Minister were to preach unto a People what are the Fundamentals of a Gospel-Church, *viz.* what Persons ought to do, that so in an orderly way they may be congregated together in the fellowship of the Gospel, or be made regular Members of the visible Church, would he tell them Laying on of hands on Officers is one Principle? Surely no; he would not affirm this to be one of the Rudiments of Christian Practice (that which first of all a Christian should be instructed in and come under, that he may have a being in God's House) nor a Foundation-principle of Church-Constitution;

on; but that the Laying on of hands spoken of *Heb. 6.* is so, nothing is more evident: for if it be a Principle of the Foundation, either it must be a Fundamental of Salvation, or of Church-Constitution; but none will say of the former, therefore it must be of the latter.

3. That it cannot intend Laying on of hands on Church-Officers, might appear further, because 'tis joined to, or coupled with Baptism; why should Laying on of hands on Officers, be by the Spirit of God laid down after this sort? Repentance from dead Works, and Faith towards God; the Doctrine of Baptisms, and Laying on of hands; the Resurrection from the Dead, and Eternal Judgment. May we not safely argue, that the Laying on of hands, which follows here in order of words, is what followed in order of practice? See *Acts 8. 17.* and *19. 6.* And is it not according to what they acknowledg sound reasoning in another case upon *Mat. 28. 20.* and *Mark 16.* that Baptism mentioned in the Commission, joined to, and following Faith and Illumination in order of words, is what the Apostles in order of practice, viz. after Faith and Illumination, did baptize with? *Acts 2. 41.* *Acts 8.* and *10.* But that was the Baptism of Water, which therefore is only intended in the Commission, &c. And thus by comparing Scripture with Scripture, we may be satisfied in those things, which at first seem'd doubtful.

4. It cannot be meant here, because all the Church of the *Hebrews*, as well as that in *Samaritania*, *Acts 8.* (and consequently all other Churches) had laid, or come under this Principle, as they

had laid Repentance, Faith, and Baptism, when they were Babes : Now, who can reasonably imagine, either that the whole Church of the *Hebrews* were Officers, or that Officers are Babes in Christ? That this is the Laying on of hands on baptized Believers, is easy to understand : 1. Because taught to Babes, *Heb. 5. 12.* 2. Babes are capable, or meet subjects thereof. 3. Babes have need of it, as Children of Milk. 4. Babes we read were in the practice thereof, *Acts 8. and 19.* 5. Because it belongs to them as such, and were at first taught it, *Heb. 5. and 6. 1, 2.* this cannot be said of any other sort. I shall say no more, only add something out of *Dr. Jer. Taylor, of Confirm.* p. 45--48. full to our purpose, which considering the learning and worthiness of the Author, I judge may be useful ; what he minds, take as followeth, speaking of Laying on of hands, called Confirmation : *We have seen (saith he) the Original from Christ, the practice and exercise of it in the Apostles, and the first Converts in Christianity : what I shall now remark is, That this is established and passed into a Christian Doctrine ; the Warranty for what I say, is Heb. 6. 1. where the holy Rite of Confirmation, so called from the effects of this Administration, and exprest by the ritual part of it, Imposition of hands, is reckoned a fundamental Point ; and here are six fundamental points of St. Paul's Catechism, which he laid as the Foundation, or beginning of the Institution of the Christian Church ; and therefore they who deny it, dig up Foundations. Now that this Imposition of hands is what the Apostle used in confirming the Baptized, and invoking the Holy Spirit upon them,*
remains

remains to be proved; which is done, by shewing,
 1. It cannot intend Absolution; nor 2. Ordination.
 And this is evident:

1. Because the Apostle would henceforth leave to speak of the Foundation, and go on to perfection, that is to higher Mysteries; now in Rituals there is none higher than Ordination.

2. The Apostle saying he would speak no more of Imposition of Hands, presently discourses of the mysteriousness of the Evangelical Priesthood, and the Honour of that Vocation; by which 'tis evident he speaks nothing of Ordination in the Catechism, or Narratives of Fundamentals.

3. This also appears from the Context, not only because Laying on of hands is immediately set after Baptism, but because in the very next words of his Discourse, he enumerates and apporions to these Ordinances their proper proportioned Effects, i. e. to Faith and Baptism, Illumination; to Laying on of hands, the tasting the Heavenly Gift, and being made Partakers of the Holy Spirit; by the thing signified declaring the Sign, and by hopes of the Resurrection, tastes of the good things of the World to come: He that falls from this State, and turns Apostate from this whole Dispensation, digging down, and turning up these Foundations, shall never be built again; he can never be baptized again, and never confirmed any more: If he remains on these Foundations, tho he sins, he may be renewed *μετάνοιαν*, by Repentance, and by resuscitation of the Spirit, if he had not wholly quenched him; but if he renounces the whole Covenant, disown and cancel these Foundations, he is desperate, he can never be renewed. This is the full explication of

this excellent place, and otherways it cannot be explicated; but therefore into this place any notice of Ordination cannot come; no Sense, no Mystery can be made of it, or drawn from it, but by the interposition of Confirmation: The whole Context is clear, rational and intelligible. He cites Calvin, and Chrysostom, as speaking the same things upon this place, p. 50.

To these I might add *Estius* on *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* 'Tis (saith he) undoubtedly to be understood of that Laying on of hands, which was administred to the Faithful presently after Baptism, of which *St. Luke* speaks, *Acts 8. & 19.* I might produce *Grotius* and *Heming*, and other modern Authors, upon the same place: But having upon occasion mentioned several before, I shall close this with a passage out of *Erasmus* on *Heb. 6. 1.* The first step to Christianity (saith he) is Repentance of our former Life, next that Salvation is to be hoped from God, next that we be purged in Baptism from our filth, next that by Laying on of hands we receive the Holy Spirit, &c.

CHAP. VI.

Opening, and further proving Laying on of hands from *Acts 8. 16, 17. and 19. 6.* Also shewing the Judgment of Antient and Modern Writers upon those two Places.

MR. *Danvers* having laboured to weaken the proof of our Practice from *Heb. 6. 1, 2.*
(tho

(tho all he says signifies nothing) comes p. 45. to examine *Acts* 8. 17. and 19. 6. which we affirm to be full Precedents for Laying on of hands upon baptized Believers. The sum of his Objections, or the way he takes to invalidate what we infer from thence, take as follows, p. 46.

Object. As to that of Samaria, it is said that several being converted in that City, and baptized by Philip, who wrought many Miracles, and continued some time with them, *Acts* 8. 13. yet did not he impose hands upon them as we read of: the Church of Jerusalem hearing that Samaria had received the Word of God, and that the Spirit was not fallen upon any of them, viz. in a visible manner, (which was a Phrase attributed to those extraordinary Measures frequently given in those days, *Acts* 10. 44. which sometimes did fall upon them before Baptism, and sometimes after) sent Peter and John, who it seems were extraordinarily gifted by God, so that on whomsoever they prayed, and laid their hands, the Spirit was visibly, extraordinarily, and immediately given; and 'tis said they laid their hands upon them, but how many 'tis not said: surely not upon all, for Simon by his profane offer discovered he had neither lot nor part therein, tho baptized, &c.

Ans. The first thing he hints at, as an Objection against our Practice from this place, is because Philip laid not his hands upon them, after he had baptized them: Which we have answered already; but this I must say now, that if Peter and John laid their hands on those Believers in Samaria, as Men miraculously gifted, or by virtue of their extraordinary Attainments, it might

seem strange that *Philip* laid not his hands upon them, being (tho but a Deacon) endowed with those extraordinary Gifts, and had wrought wonderful Signs and Miracles in the same City before: The reason therefore why *Philip* did not impose hands upon them was,

1. Because not ministerially capacitated so to do, it not belonging to him on the account of his Office, nor his extraordinary Gifts and Endowments. This also I might further shew, because the Church at *Jerusalem* did not send to *Samaria* Men simply indowed with miraculous Gifts, but such as had Ministerial Power and Authority as the Servants of Christ, in his Name to compleat and perfect what was wanting among them.

'Tis an Act (saith Dr. *Hammond* on Acts 8. 17.) reserved to the Rulers of the Church, and not communicated or allowed to inferiour Officers, such as *Philip the Deacon* here.

2. But whereas Mr. *Danvers* seems to affirm, that as some in the primitive time had the Gift of Healing, so others had the Gift or Power to give the Holy Spirit; 'tis utterly denied, and the contrary has often been proved, for that 'tis only the Gift of God, and Christ's blessed Prerogative; they were found in their Duty, they prayed, and laid on their hands, and left the issue to God to give the Spirit, according to his promise and good pleasure.

Object. But probably some may object, *We read of none but the Apostles that laid hands on baptized Believers; and tho they acted not by virtue of their miraculous Endowments, nor had power to give the Holy Spirit, yet they might act herein by virtue of their extraordinary call unto that Office.* *Ans.*

Ans. I affirm that they acted in all other Ordinances, yea, and did whatsoever they did in the Worship and Service of Christ, by virtue of the said extraordinary Call unto the Ministry, as well as in this: But doth it therefore follow that nothing the Apostles practised is a Precedent or Rule unto us, as some ignorantly have affirmed, unless so called of God, and endowed as they were?

3. Had not *Matthias* the same power to administer Ordinances (who was mediately called to his Office by the Church) as the other Apostles immediately called by Christ Jesus? and is not the End and Work of the Office (however called to it) one and the same? *viz. the work of the Ministry, the perfecting the Saints, and edifying the Body of Christ, Eph. 4.*

4. We read hardly of any that preached the Word Authoritatively, or officiated in any Gospel-administration by virtue of their Office, besides the extraordinary Apostles; and therefore if what they did be not a Law or Rule to us, and to all ordinary Ministers, to the end of the World, we shall be at a loss in many other respects: It must therefore be granted, that what they taught and practised as an Ordinance of Christ, and foundation-Principle of his Doctrine, they delivered it unto faithful Men, that were their Successors, that they might be able to teach others also, 2 Tim. 2. 3. And this agrees with Phil. 4. 9. *Those things that you have both learned and received, heard and seen in me, do; and the God of Peace shall be with you.*

5. Had it been a Service for that Day only,

and none to be Administrators thereof but those great Apostles, it would not have been left as a standing, or foundation principle in God's House, and been joined to Faith, and the Resurrection.

In the 2d place, he would have us believe the end of that Administration was for the extraordinary or visible Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which we have clearly refuted; yet I shall say further, that by his arguing, the Apostles resolved that all the Church at *Samarina*, yea and that at *Ephesus*, should have the extraordinary Gifts, since they laid their hands on all that were baptized, without exception. Nay, it follows roundly, that where ever the Apostles found any particular Disciple, or Disciples, that had not received those visible, or extraordinary Gifts, they were to lay their hands on them to that end: For I presume *Mr. Danvers* judges, had *Paul* found 1200, as he found 12, at *Ephesus*, who had not received, nor heard of the Holy Ghost, he would have laid hands on them; which presupposes also, that those miraculous Gifts were promised, and belong to every particular Member in the Church, which is directly contrary to 1 Cor. 12. 4, 7, 8, 9, 29, 30. for tho (as we have proved) the Holy Spirit be promised to every sincere Believer in the Lord Jesus, yet are not the extraordinary Gifts promised to any in particular, being only reserved in the bosom or breast of the Almighty, to whom, and after what manner he will distribute them. 1 Cor. 12. 4. *There are diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit; to one is given by the same Spirit, the word of Wisdom; to another the word of Knowledge; to another Faith; to another the gift of*

of Healing, by the same Spirit; to another the working of Miracles; to another Prophecy; to another discerning of Tongues, v. 8, 9, 10. Are all Prophets? are all workers of Miracles? have all the Gift of Healing? do all speak with Tongues? &c. Hence nothing can be clearer than this, that tho all have right to the Spirit, yet but very few had the extraordinary Gifts thereof in the primitive Times.

The Third thing Mr. Danvers seems to affirm, is, that all in *Samaria* that were baptized, had not hands laid upon them, because it is said of *Simon*, he had no part nor lot in that matter.

1. Here he begs the Question, taking for granted, that *Simon* had not hands laid upon him; but why might not *Simon* have lot and part in that matter, if by Lot and Part be meant the visible, or miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, since Hypocrites may partake of them, as our Saviour plainly signifies, and also doth our Apostle, 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2?

2. He might come under the Ordinance, and yet his heart not being right with God, he might not have any part or lot in the blessed Comforter, the Spirit of Promise; which the World receiveth not, nor can an un sanctified Heart partake of.

3. Their reception of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, was partly to convince the Apostles and Believers themselves that Christ had made good his promise of sending the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to them.

4. By Lot or Part in that matter, may not be meant partaking of the ritual, or external part of the Ordinance, but rather refers to his desire of

having power to be an Administrator of it upon others, so that the Holy Spirit might be given to those he laid his hands on. But,

5. If we should grant *Simon* had not hands imposed upon him, which I rather incline to, yet would it not hurt our Cause in the least, because he might be discovered to be a profane Wretch before it came to be his lot to partake thereof: if therefore it appears, and may be granted, that all that were baptized in *Samaria* came under this Appointment save *Simon*, we have as much as we desire: And surely this cannot rationally be denied by any that read the words, *vers. 12. When they believed they were baptized, both Men and Women.* Compare this with *vers. 16. that*

† *M. Black:*
wood notes
the emphasis
to lie in this
Pronoun Relative
They; the
Antecedent
hereunto must
needs be the
Baptized, &c.

the Holy Spirit was fallen on none of them †, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Must not they, and them, mean all who are said to be baptized? So likewise when 'tis said *ver. 13. they laid their hands upon them;* doth not them intend the very same they prayed for? and shall we think they did not pray for them all? had not all the like need of God's

Spirit? and is it not promised to all the Sons and Handmaids? Or shall we think the Apostle did not pray for the Women as well as the Men, the weaker Vessels, as well as the stronger? In *Mat. 28. 19, 20.* (as 'tis well noted by *Mr. Fisher*) 'tis said, *Go, teach all Nations, baptizing them; and in the words following, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you.* By them must needs

needs intend them all, and every of them that were made Disciples, and baptized.

One word or two further concerning what Mr. D. objects against us from *Acts 19. 6.* from the Effects that followed this Administration; he still arguing as if that were the absolute End thereof: *Which*, as a great Doctor well observes, is too trifling a fancy to be put in balance against so sacred an Institution. But let us examine this Scripture a little more: *Have you received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?* (saith our Apostle.) They said unto him, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit.* Unto what then were ye baptized? &c. Two things are here very remarkable.

1. That the Holy Spirit (according to the sense of the Apostle inquiring after their reception of it) is the undoubted Right of every baptized Believer in Christ Jesus, appears from these two expressions; *Have ye received the Spirit since ye believed?* (No.) *Unto what then were ye baptized?* It seems strange (as if Paul should say) that you having believed in Christ, and been baptized, have not yet received the Holy Spirit, since it is the great Legacy our Lord and Master left to every one of his Disciples?

2. 'Tis evident that whosoever was baptized after Christ's resurrection in his Name was instructed into the Promise of the Holy Ghost, and consequently into Laying on of Hands, the outward Ceremony, or Ministry of it, belonging to them as Persons so considered. Paul seems to question their Baptism, since they were wholly ignorant of that glorious Promise of Blessing annexed thereto;

thereto; which considered, may fully satisfy any unbiassed Person that the extraordinary or miraculous Gifts could not be the End of this Administration: and as touching those Effects that followed, 'tis clear the like Effects followed all other Ordinances as well as this.

Object. And whereas Mr. D. presumes to say, *They were some of the Church of Ephesus; and again, not the whole Church.*

Ans. 1. Can it be thought that those were at that time Members of the Church, and yet so ignorant of the Holy Spirit? And surely Paul would not have baptized them again, if they had been Members of the Church before.

2. They are not called the Church, nor of the Church, nor some of the Church, but certain Disciples; yea, and such as appears were only instructed into the Baptism of John.

3. Tho we read but of 12 that had hands laid on them, which was the number of the Men * that Paul found at that time who lay short of their Duty and Privilege in that respect; since we see the Spirit was their Right, as baptized Believers, it follows that it is the duty of every Believer to yield obedience to this

Ordinance, as well as those twelve. The way of God touching the Administration of Gospel-Institutions being one and the same in all the Churches of the Saints, notwithstanding what has already been offered, may be a satisfactory Answer to Mr. D. concerning what he minds from those two Scriptures: yet finding so many

Learned.

Learned Men, both antient and of later times, agreeing with us in their Expositions on these two Places; and not knowing but their Words may with some take more place than what such a one as I may speak, I'll cite a Passage or two.

Cyprian, speaking of *Acts* 8. 17. saith, *It was not necessary they should be baptized again, only what was wanting, was performed by Peter and John, that by Prayer and Imposition of Hands the Holy Spirit should be invocated.*

Saith Hierom on the *Acts* of the Apostles, *We find another Instance of the Celebration of this ritual Mystery, for it is signally exprest of the Baptized at Ephesus: Paul first baptized them, and then laid his Hands upon them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And these Testimonies are the great Warranty for this holy Ordinance.*

Eucherites is cited by Dr. Taylor p. 43. speaking thus: *The same thing now done in Imposition of Hands on single Persons, is no other than what was done upon all Believers in the descent of the H. Spirit.*

He mentions *Zanchius*, saying, *I wish the Examples of the Apostles and Primitive Churches were of more value amongst Christians. It were well if they were so, (saith the Doctor) but there is more than meer Examples; these Examples of such Solemnities, the Apostles are our Masters in them, and have given Rules and Precedents for the Church to follow: this is a Christian Law, and written (as all Scriptures are) for our Instruction.*

Estius on *Heb.* 6. 2. affirms that the Laying on of Hands mentioned *Acts* 8. 17. *Acts* 19. 6. by St. Luke, is that of Confirmation, whereby the Spirit of God is given to Persons baptized, where-

with

with they being strengthened, confess the Name of Christ undauntedly among the Enemies of the Faith. And again (saith he) That Hands were wont to be laid upon Persons baptized, after the example of the Apostles, all Antiquity teacheth.

Dr. Hammond also in his Annot. on Acts 8.17. saith; That it was Confirmation, may appear probable, because it so soon attended their Conversion and Baptism. When the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John, vers. 14. Which agrees well (saith he) with that of Confirmation, which is an Act reserved to the Rulers of the Church, and not communicated or allowed to inferior Officers, such as Philip the Deacon here.

And then paraphrasing upon Acts 19. 6. he saith, After this Paul by Imposition of hands, and benediction, gave them Confirmation, by which means the Holy Spirit came on them.

Mr. Ralph Venning in his Remains, speaking of Acts 8. 17. and 19. 6. gives his understanding upon them; That it was the practice of the Apostles, after they had baptized Persons, sooner or later, to lay Hands upon them.

Thus from what has been said, I hope it may appear to all inquiring Souls, in opposition to what Mr. Danvers saith, page 47. that these two Places are clear Precedents and Rules for this Practice, as well as Heb. 6. 1, 2. and other Scriptures we have insisted upon, for as much as there was a Laying on of Hands practised immediately after Baptism, and with much certainty upon every Member, or baptized Believer, and to such an End as is attainable in these times.

C H A P. VII.

Further shewing, that Prayer, with Imposition of Hands upon baptized Believers, remains for ever as a standing or perpetual Administration.

BUT lest any should still object, this Ordinance doth not continue, neither is the End attainable now, I am willing to add two or three Arguments, for the further evincing of these particulars.

Arg. 1. Because the Lord was pleased to bear witness to, or ratify this blessed Ordinance or Principle of Christ's Doctrine, with the like Signs, Wonders, and Gifts of the Holy Spirit, as he did any other Word, Command, or Principle of the said Doctrine. Now what was thus established, must needs remain in full force to the end of the World as our duty: and dangerous it is to labour to make it void; for by the same Argument may an Enemy lay waste, and take away another, yea, and consequently every one.

Arg. 2. Because it is a Foundation-principle of God's House, or one of the great Pillars (next to Christ) on which it is built, it must needs remain; and very dangerous it is for any to take away a Foundation-stone.

'Tis very absurd (saith Mr. Blackwood on Matth. p. 688.) to think that one of the six Foundation-principles,

principles, commended to us by the Apostle, should cease, and all the other remain to the end of the World: Nay, is not Imposition of Hands placed in the midst, betwixt Faith and Repentance on the one side, and Eternal Judgment on the other? 'tis fenced in on every side, there is no coming to slight it. 'Tis absurd to think the Apostle would place one temporary Principle, that was to last but a short time, amongst five perpetual Principles, and call them all by the same name of a Foundation, &c.

Arg. 3. Because the Promise of the Spirit is very extensive; 'tis made to all believing and obedient Souls to the end of the World; *Matt. 28. ult.* Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always to the end of the World. *John 14. 15, 16, 17.* If you love me, keep my Commandments; and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth, which the World cannot receive, &c.

Dr. Fer. Taylor, p. 53. speaks excellently concerning the perpetuity of this Ordinance: And from this very ground, take his own words; The perpetuity of this holy Rite appears, 1. Because the great Gift of the Holy Ghost was promised to abide with the Church for ever: Repent, and be baptized every one of you, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost; not the meanest Person amongst you but shall receive this great thing; for the Promise is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even so many as the Lord our God shall call; this Promise is made to all, and unto all for ever. And presently, speaking as to Laying on

of Hands, as God's way for the ministring of it; I say, such a Solemnity (saith he) 'tis not easie to be supposed should be appointed; that is, it is not imaginable that a solemn Rite, annex'd to a perpetual Promise, should be transient and temporary: for by the nature of Relatives, they must be of equal abode; the Promise is of a thing for ever; the Ceremony or Rite was annexed to the Promise, and therefore this also must abide for ever.

Arg. 4. Because the Spirit which is promised, is the Comforter that leads us into all Truth, and helps the Saints in their Testimony and Sufferings for Christ; and 'tis that by which they are sealed also to the day of Redemption, Eph. 1. 13. *Who after that ye believed, ye were sealed by that Spirit of Promise. He speaks it to the Ephesians, who well understood his meaning, by remembering what was done to them by the Apostle; who a while before, after he had baptized them, laid his Hands upon them (saith the Doctor) so they received, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise.*

Now do not we as much need the Spirit's guidance, and to be born up in our Testimony, Sufferings and Temptations, as the Saints of former Ages; and to be sealed by the Spirit of Promise as they did? Why then should we not be willing to wait on God, in the same way he has prescribed, for receiving a further increase of it, even in which the primitive Saints did yield obedience?

Object. *But some will say, We have the Spirit in as great a measure as you, who never came under Laying on of Hands; and what greater measure have*

have you after your obedience thereto than before?

Ans. 1. We dare not boast of our Indowments; we are poor and needy, and therefore willing to use all Advantages, and be found in every Ordinance, to meet with more of Christ and his Spirit; and if you have so much, that you need not pray, nor use the means God directs to for obtaining more, 'tis a rare state you are arrived to.

2. If God be better than his Word, we will not complain; he hath many ways to convey his Spirit into our hearts; yet this is the great Ordinance for distributing of it to baptized Believers. But may we not say with one of the Antients, *By this rite of Imposition of Hands, God hath promised, and the Saints received the Holy Ghost?* for tho (saith he) the Spirit of God was given extraregularly, and at all times as God pleased, yet this of Imposition of Hands was *ἡ ἁγιασματικὴ λειτουργία*, this was the Ministry of the Spirit; we receive Christ when we hear, and obey his Word, we eat Christ by Faith; and yet the blessed Eucharist is *ἡ εὐχαριστικὴ λειτουργία*, the Ministry of the Body and Blood of Christ: the Lord's Supper is appointed ritually to convey Christ's Body and Blood to us; so is Laying on of Hands ordained ritually to give us the Spirit.

Now probably some who are against the Lord's Supper, may say, they feed upon Christ, and have as much Communion with him, and Faith in him, as many of us who often partake thereof; and may be can say as much on this account, as you on the other: will you therefore neglect your Duty touching breaking of Bread?

There is a Promise of the Spirit made in Baptism;

tism; yet some may say, they have more of the Spirit than you or I, and yet never were baptized. *Cornelius*, tho he had received a large measure of the Spirit, yet was very willing to be baptized, and to do what ever *Peter*, from Christ's command, enjoined him. And thus the Objection is answered.

Object. But extraordinary Effects did accompany this Administration, and such do not follow now; therefore the thing you plead for is ceased.

Ans. Let Dr. Taylor speak now, for I have largely answered this Objection elsewhere, before I met with the learned Doctor: If this be all (saith he, p. 57--59.) that can be said in opposition to it, it is infinitely vain.

1. In the days of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit produced miraculous Effects, but neither always, nor at all in all Men; Are all workers of Miracles? do all speak with Tongues? &c. the Wind bloweth where it listeth; some have Gifts after this manner, some after that.

2. These Gifts were not necessary at all Times, any more than to all Persons; but the Promise of the Holy Spirit did belong to all, and was performed to all, but not in the like manner. Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit, of Faith, and Power; the Holy Ghost was given to him, to fulfil his Faith principally; working Miracles was but collateral, and incident: but there is also an Infusion of the Holy Spirit to all, and that for ever. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every Man, to profit withal: And therefore if the Grace be given to all, there is no reason that the ritual Ministration of that Grace should cease, on pretence that the Spirit is not given extraordinarily.

3. Those

3. Those extraordinary Gifts were indeed at first necessary; (he gives several reasons thereof) one, because of them who could not receive the understanding of an incorporeal Nature; that if afterwards they be not so done, they may be believed by those things which were already done: another, because of the state of the Church. But the greater Gifts (saith he) were to abide for ever; therefore 'tis observable that St. Paul says, that the Gift of Tongues is one of the least and most useless things, a meer sign, and not so much as a sign to a Believer, but to Infidels and Unbelievers.

4. To every ordinary and perpetual Ministry, at first there were extraordinary Effects, and miraculous Consignations: We find 3000 converted at one Sermon, 5000 at another; and Persons were miraculously cured by Prayer, at the visitation of the Sick; and Devils cast out in the conversion of a Sinner: And now tho we see no such extraordinary Effects, it follows not that the Visitation of the Sick, Preaching, Sermons, &c. are not ordinary and perpetual Ministrations; and therefore to fancy that Invocation of the Holy Spirit, and Imposition of Hands is to cease, when the extraordinary and temporary Contingencies of it are gone, is too trifling a fancy to be put into the balance against so sacred an Institution, relying upon so many Scriptures.

5. He argues yet further, shewing tho the Gifts of Tongues, and outward Miracles, remain not with the Church, yet the greater, or more transcendent Gifts of the Spirit do continue, viz. Sanctification and Power, Fortitude and Faith, Hope and Love, &c. These are (saith he) the Miracles of Grace, to throw down the pride of Lucifer, to tread

tread on the great Dragon, and to triumph over our spiritual Enemies, to cure a diseased Soul, to be unharmed by the poison of Temptation, &c. This is more than to receive the Spirit, or a power of Miracles, and supernatural Products in a natural Matter; for this is from a supernatural Principle, to receive supernatural Aids to a supernatural End, in the Diviner Spirit of a Man; and this being more miraculous than the other, it ought not to be pretended that the discontinuance of extraordinary Miracles should cause the discontinuance of an ordinary Ministration; and this is that (saith he) which I was to prove.

He proceeds to other Reasons, but I think he has said enough; and therefore I shall return to Mr. Danvers, p. 48. who labours against the stream, and would make us believe that the Laying on of Hands upon Timothy, 2 Tim. 1. 6. and 1 Tim. 4. 14. are the same; which must be rejected, since several Reasons have been given to the contrary, that have not in the least been removed. That Timothy had Hands laid upon him twice, 'tis evident; i. e. soon after his Baptism, and when ordained to Office. One good reason for it is given by Mr. Blackwood: Paul (saith he) speaks of such Gifts, as were given by the Laying on of his own Hands, τῶν χειρῶν μου; but the Imposition in Ordination was by the Hands of the Eldership, 1 Tim. 4. 14. where the Greek words are μετ' ἐνδιόσω, signifying a conjunction of Persons; but 2 Tim. 1. 6. is διὰ ἐνδιόσω, to denote the act of one Man.

And doubtless such an Exposition as Mr. Danvers gives, too much reflects on the Apostle, who hated nothing more than Pride and Arrogancy: Surely he would not have appropriated to himself

self alone, what was done by others as well as himself.

But again, I am perswaded our Brethren are sensible of what has been said in respect of those Gifts *Timothy* received through Layings on of Hands, which have been shewed by several to be different, (one only relating to his Office, or Ministerial Power committed to him; the other to such Gifts as are proper to all the Saints) tho they take no notice of it.

I am loth to say, that all that Mr. *Danvers* has done in his small Tract, has been to darken Counsel with words without knowledg; yet one would admire to consider how confusedly he hath writ on this Subject, who seems to blame us for being so positive as to what Laying on of Hands is intended in *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* which is, as if a Master should blame his Scholar for affirming A is A, and B is B: Surely if we have not perfectly learned our first Lesson, or Rudiments of our Profession, we shall never be good Tutors of others: The Apostle blames the *Hebrews, ch. 5. 22.* for being such ill Proficients, that they had gone no further; and you seem to blame us for going so far, as to affirm positively what are the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ. But give me leave to tell you, it is as easy to know what Laying on of Hands is intended *Heb. 6.* as what Baptism our Saviour refers to, *Mat. 28. 20.*

But *secondly*, You may be assured were we at a loss in the case, we should never come to learn of you; for Mr. *D.* by his own grant, *pag. 49.* signifieth he had not attained to a certain knowledg of it, nor was able to be positive in the case; many things

things being hard and difficult to be understood, which those that are ignorant, wrest, saith he, &c.

Answ. No marvel if ignorant Men are at a loss, and captivated in their understandings, abusing and wresting those mysterious places, or things contained in *Paul's* Epistles, when Men of knowledge shall lose themselves in such a plain and easy path. I knew a Man (may be learned too) who a while ago, knew not but that Baptism, and Laying on of hands, &c. in *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* might intend those legal Washings, and Laying on of Hands upon the heads of *Bullocks*, sacrificed in the time of the Law. I am glad to find other Opposers of this Truth of another Judgment. Would Men deny themselves, and not trust their own understandings, they might soon see the way plain before them, that those first Principles of the Oracles of God, called Milk for Babes, and not strong Meat, are none of those things spoken of by *Peter*, so hard to be understood.

But since Mr. D. says, he will not leave us in the dark, but resolves to give us his apprehension of this Text, in which he thinks he has the mind of Christ, pag. 49, 50. we will proceed.

Yet this let me premise, that what he has laid down as his Judgment on this Text, Mr. Tomlinson has very well answered in a Treatise lately printed, pag. 22, 23. and shewed the ridiculousness of such an Exposition. I fear Mr. D. did not implore the Throne of Grace for Light and Direction before he begun to write on this Subject, he is so much beclouded as to the meaning of this Scripture. He conceives, that the six Principles

Principles mentioned here, are very comprehensive, and may take in the ten Commandments, the Lord's Supper, and several other things: Nay he says, that Repentance and Faith may comprehend all, both the negative and positive part of Holiness.

Ans. 1. If the whole of Religion, or Doctrine of Godliness is comprehended in these six Principles, why should the Apostle call them first Principles? 'tis improper to call those the first that comprehend all: by this Argument, when the Foundation is laid, the whole Building is finished.

2. And if the whole of Piety, or Holiness, be included in the two first Principles, Repentance, and Faith, there was no need to enumerate any more: Nay, by this Argument, obedience to Christ in Baptism, and Laying on of Hands, together with the belief of the Resurrection and Eternal Judgment, are not comprehended in the negative or positive part of Holiness: to what purpose then have we spent our time in writing about either of these Principles?

3. But again, as Mr. Tomlinson minds, *How could it be the weakness of these Hebrews, that they had need to be taught them again? or how could the Apostle say, he would leave them to go on to perfection? &c.* Surely if in these first Principles all Religion be comprehended, he would not do well to leave them; it might rather have been their perfection ever to remain there, viz. in preaching, studying and practising of them, and go no further; or if we must needs leave them, we must leave all Religion and Holiness, and so turn Ranters, Atheists, or Quakers.

4 But, if the whole Body of Religion and
Holiness

Holiness is comprehended in these six Principles, then no Christian had gone further; nay, nor perfectly learned the *ABC* of his Profession, and we must always be learning them, and so ever be but Babes in Christ: and no reason had the Apostle to blame the *Hebrews* that they had gone no further, since in those beginning Principles were comprehended the whole of their Duty.

5. And since these Principles are in the Apostle's sense to be looked upon as Milk, and for Babes; what then is the Meat? and who are the strong Men? Surely when we have done with our Milk, the Feast is ended; and there is no after-Dish, to speak according to the nature of this Metaphor.

Again, *P. 45.* as Mr. *Danvers* would have Repentance and Faith to comprehend both the negative and positive part of Holiness; so he proceeds to tell us how comprehensive Laying on of hands is; *That it takes in all sorts that are spoken of, viz. Miracles, Healings, and Gifts, that were for the Confirmation of the Gospel, and the Investiture of Church-Officers, &c.*

Ans. This is as true as the former, and as good Divinity every whit; and when he has answered our Arguments against this strange Exposition, we will argue that Point further. But doth he not hereby make Laying on of hands for miraculous Healing a perpetual Administration, it being a part (in his sense) of the Foundation of God's House? We have shewed why it cannot intend that on Sick Persons, nor on Officers of the Church; and as to extraordinary Gifts for

Confirmation of the Gospel, if he mean that spoken of *Acts* 8. 17. and 19. 6. we utterly deny it, and clearly prove the contrary, that it was not the end of that Service, &c. no more than of Assembling together, Prayer, Preaching, &c. since such Miraculous Effects followed more or less every one of those, and other Gospel-ministrations, as well as Laying on of hands on baptized Believers. This considered, 'tis strange he should reason after this manner.

But we further say, there is but one Laying on of hands intended in *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. because 'tis exprest in the singular number, *Laying on of hands*, and not Lavings, &c.

Mr. *Danvers* saith *This is a meer Criticism*, and hath nothing of truth in it. He affirms that *Laying on of hands*, is as plural as *Baptism*. This is all the Answer he gives; see page 51.

Ans. If a bare Affirmation may be taken for a Proof in this, we are answered, and Mr. *Danvers* has done his business; what is here more? I desire to know how he would write were he to distinguish between one Hand and several, since Hands are in the Plural Number? The Administrator is not to lay one only, but both his Hands: there can be no distinguishing (if this Man is not mistaken) between one and divers kinds; for wherever the Scripture speaks but of one sort (in our Opponents judgment) 'tis express, as it is here, *viz.* Laying on of hands, and so as plural: see *1 Tim.* 4. 14. I need not say more, only cite a Passage of a Learned Writer upon this very Place, and Objection; 'Tis most palpably apparent (saith he) to such as are not asleep in their reading
of

of that Text, Heb. 6. 1, 2. that it speaks in the singular Number, of one Laying on of hands alone, and not of Layings on of hands, as it must have been exprest, had he meant more kinds of Imposition of hands than one: for tho Hands be the Plural Number, yet [note] Laying, which is the Phrase you speak to, or else you speak nihil ad Rhombum, is a Substantive of the Singular Number, both in the English and the Greek.

But to proceed: Mr. D. p. 51, 52. gives us the ground of his Offence concerning the nature or manner of our maintaining this Principle of Imposition of Hands.

1. Negatively, he tells us wherein his offence lies not, viz. Not because we pray for a blessing on our Brethren and Sisters, or for the practice or gesture of Lifting up, or Laying on of hands; provided it be not urged as of absolute necessity, &c. But,

2. When imposed as an Institution of Christ, a beginning Doctrine, or Oracle of God, a Foundation of Christian Religion, to which every Disciple of Christ ought to submit on penalty of Non-communication, for rejecting a Fundamental Principle, tho not one word of Institution, Command, Precept, or Example for the same; and that under pretence of receiving more of the Spirit of Christ thereby, which is a Spirit of Love, Meekness, &c. There appears the Spirit of uncharitableness, judging, rending, and dividing the Body of Christ, and for asserting for Doctrine and Practice, the Customs and Commands of Men: it is for these things our Offences lie so well founded upon Deut. 4. 2. and 12. 23. Rev. 22. 18. Prov. 30. 6.

Ans. 1. Could we have such a liberty as to make a holy Institution of Christ only a formal or civil Ceremony or Gesture, or a thing indifferent, to do, or not do; our Brethren, it seems, would not be offended.

2. Were it a true Charge he brings, he would have cause to be offended with us; but whether it be a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, and an Oracle of God, or a Tradition of Men, which we contend for, let the impartial Reader judge. Here is nothing offered by our Opponent to deserve any further Answer; it calls more for Reprehension than Confutation. Who seemed more censorious than Mr. *Darvers*, who charged his Brethren with what they most abominated, *viz.* tearing and dividing the Body of Christ, Will-worship, nay being under the dreadful Curse of Adding to the Word of God?

3. Whether we are guilty of Schism, rending and tearing the Body of Christ, or those who neglect his Words, or Foundation-Principle of his Doctrine (I might say reject it) is fully manifested in a late Book Intituled, *The Searchers for Schism searched*, that has not yet been answered.

4. May not the *Independents* and others charge you on the account of Baptism, with rending and tearing the Body of Christ, since you deny Breaking of Bread with them, on that Consideration as some do with you about Laying on of hands, a Principle of the same nature? Doth not Mr. *Wills* in his Answer to your former Book of Baptism, charge you in much like words, as you do us here? And truly, if I mistake not, Mr. *D.* has cleared us from Schism, and well answered himself

self in his late Reply, Page 169, 170, 171. as he says of Baptism: *Suffer me to speak of Laying on of hands; There is nothing in the Principle it self but what inclines to Piety and*

Mr. D's Innocency and Truth vindicated.

Unity: It being designed by Christ not only to promote Sanctification, but to further Love and Peace, in the way of Righteousness and Truth.

Why should Baptism be esteemed the whole and only Inlet into the visible Church, when 'tis but one of the Six Fundamental Principles of Church-Constitution? Why should he have a greater esteem for one than for another Institution? Did our Brethren see Laying on of hands to be an Ordinance of the same nature with Baptism, I might hope they would not be of the mind some are of: 'tis sad when a Fundamental Principle of Christian Religion shall be made indifferent. I have a tender respect to all that love Christ, yet dare not violate that Holy Order left in his Word, knowing how severely he has manifested his displeasure against such as have been negligent therein.

5. Now tho we grant Baptism an Initiating Ordinance, yet not that alone. *There are two Doors to be passed through, (saith a Learned Writer) before we can come ad adyta & intima Ecclesiæ penetralia, viz. Baptism, and Laying on of hands: whereof the latter properly and immediately gives admittance.*

Mr. Hammer, p. 22. cites some antient Christians speaking thus: *Confirmatione protinus data plena auctoritas, & jus Corpori Christi & sanguini cum omnibus Fidelibus communicandi: that is, Con-*

firmation (or Imposition of hands) forthwith gives full authority and right of Communion in the Body and Blood of Christ. And in another place saith the same Person; He that was not confirmed, was not admitted to the Eucharist.

Doubtless if the Church of *Judea*, first planted in the order of the Gospel, is to be followed; or if that which was the practice of some of the Churches, was also of every Church, then both these Ordinances, as well as the other beginning Principles, must precede, or are prerequisite to Church-Communion and Fellowship.

Object. But doth not this straiten and narrow the Interest of Jesus Christ?

Ans. Mr. Danvers's Reply to Mr. Wills about Baptism, is a very good answer: viz. This (saith he) is no other than Reformation in all Ages (since the Antichristian defection) hath been charged on, and particularly that Reformation that has been endeavoured in that other Ordinance of the Lord's Supper; therefore the Presbyterians cry out against the Independents for sinful Schism, Fomenters of Faction, and narrowing of Christ's Interest, in their respective Separations, and Church-Communications. The same do the Prelats say to the Presbyterians; and the very same do the Papists say to the Episcoparians.

If Mr. D. in the work of Reformation excels, or has more light than such he speaks of, in respect of Church-Constitution and Communion, and resolves to pursue his work, tho he is reproach'd on this account; why should he blame us, who, according to our light, labour after a pure and perfect Reformation? or doth he judge
he

he has got to such a degree of knowledg, that he is perfect, and needs no more light nor instruction, and that the last Stone of Reformation and Restoration here is laid, because Baptism shines forth in its primitive purity? Remember him who said (such was his Humility) *What I know not, teach thou me.* And Apollos, tho mighty in the Scriptures, could stoop to the Counsel and Instruction of *Aquila and Priscilla*, tho much inferior to him, *who taught him the way of God more perfectly*, Act. 18. 26.

6. Ought not we to *stand fast, and hold the Traditions we have been taught?* and is not th^{is} worthy of Commendation? what saith the *ap-
stle*, 1 Cor. 11. 2. *Now I praise you Brethren, in that you remember me in all things, and keep the Ordinances as they were delivered unto you.* And are we not commanded to *withdraw from every Brother that walks disorderly, and not after the Traditions we have received?* Besides, can we comfortably have Communion with such as oppose a Command of God, nay, that make it but a Tradition of Men, and an Antichristian Innovation? And as in all Fundamentals of Salvation, so in those of Church-Constitution, we ought to be agreed, before we can orderly sit down together.

7. But to say no more, I would caution all our Brethren to take heed what they affirm on this account, I mean concerning us, and this sacred Institution, since they seem so cloudy in their understanding about those Scriptures urged as the great Warranty for our Practice: If God has hid (for reasons best known to himself) this

Truth of Imposition of hands from their eyes, as he hath the holy Ordinance of Baptism from the *Independents*, &c. it will be their wisdom to forbear Reflections; let them not be angry, lest it be found to be a Truth of God; and they consequently prove offended at Christ himself, who left this as well as Baptism amongst the beginning-principles of his Doctrine. Why should they be offended at us for having an equal love to all the Commandments of Christ? I would hope they have reason to judg, 'tis from hence we so earnestly contend with them on this account.

8. I cannot but marvel, that our Brethren should call Laying on of hands, a Doctrine, or Tradition of Men, and render those who plead for it, guilty of adding to the Word of God; and yet receive such into Communion at the Lord's Table, as are in the practice of it. What uncharitable thoughts do they retain of their Brethren? and what guilt, on this Consideration, do they bring on their own Souls?

But let me close with one Caution more; since they know 'tis as sinful every way to diminish from God's Word as to alter or add to it, let them take heed lest they be found guilty therein.

We have now traced Mr. *D.* quite through, and have little more to do: In page 53. he labours to remove an Objection brought against him from *Antiquity*; and since he has fairly stated it, take it in his own words.

As to the point of Antiquity, tho' 'tis granted the Antients, and their Followers ever since, have erred not only in the Subject, but in divers Circumstances

stances about this Rite of Imposition of hands, yet in- as-much as there has been all along such a witness born to the thing it self, it makes for its Apostolicalness, and confirms our Practice therein. Now take his Answer to it: It doth not appear (saith he) that such a Witness hath been born all along thereto, for Mr. Baxter ingenuously acknowledges that Justin Martyr, Ireneus, and others in those times are silent about it, &c. And those Authorities that are pretended to assert the same in the first Centuries, have been proved to be spurious and supposititious. 2ly. That pretence of antient Prescription, without the Word of God to warrant it, can never justify the Divine Authority of any Practice.

Ans. 1. We fully agree with him, viz. whatever is found in antient Prescriptions concerning this, or any Practice, signifies nothing, if God's Word doth not witness to it: But having such evident proof from God's Word to warrant this Precept, we never judged it worth while to search into Authors concerning it; neither should we have cited any now, had we not been fore'd by our Opposers. And as to what he says concerning Mr. Baxter's ingenuous Confession, that Justin Martyr and Ireneus are both silent about it, it signifies very little; for first, we have nothing but Mr. Baxter's say-so for it, who may be has overlook'd some places of these Authors, or probably not met with all their Works. But,

2. Since their Silence only is pretended, it carries no great force with it; must we of necessity produce all the Antients expressly witnessing thereto, or else is all nothing that is brought from Antiquity in the Case? We have mentioned se-

veral antient Witnesses, and some of the 2d and 3d Centuries, which are neither spurious, supposititious, suborn'd Witnesses, nor Knights of the Post, tho Mr. D. is pleas'd so to call them.

And now to conclude, we must say again, against what is mention'd, p. 54. that there is a clearer Precept for Imposition of hands on baptized Believers as such, than can be urged for that on Church-Officers, or the observation of the first Day of the Week, &c.

I have ground to conclude Mr. D. thinks it his duty to keep holy the first Day of the Week, as the Christian Sabbath.

We gave Mr. D. no ground to say that which he did of us, *viz. Repröach the Wisdom of Christ, and slight the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, as tho we had not a sufficient Direction therein in all parts of God's Worship.* God forbid we should be guilty of such things! Rome and others may here-in justly be charged; but our Souls witness against it as an abominable Assertion.

And that remarkable Expression of Dr. Owen's, as Mr. D. calls it, we can with all readiness and simplicity close in with; and judg it necessary once more to recite it, *viz. This then they who hold Communion with Christ, are careful of, they will admit nothing, practise nothing in the Worship of God, private or publick, but what they have his Warrant for: for unless it comes in his Name, with Thus saith the Lord Jesus, they will not hear an Angel from Heaven; they know the Apostles themselves were to teach the Saints only what Christ commanded them.* Communion with God, p. 171.

The Doctor's Rule is ever to be followed, the
Lord

Lord open his eyes; for how doth this clearly overthrow all his Arguments for Infant-Baptism? &c. But what injury doth it do us, who can say, *Thus saith the Lord Jesus?* 'tis left on record amongst the first Principles of his Doctrine, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* 'tis a Command of God, if the Oracles of God be his Command, *Heb. 5. 12.* which sure none will deny; since the Apostle *Paul*, and *Stephen* (a Man full of the Holy Spirit) affirm them so to be. We believe what the Doctor saith, *viz.* that the Apostles were to teach nothing but what Christ commanded them, to whom they were obedient therein: and surely then all may see a Divine Institution for this Practice; for was it not taught to the *Hebrew Church?* *Heb. 5. 12.* And did not *Peter* and *John* teach it to the Saints at *Samaria?* and *Paul* to the Disciples at *Ephesus*, and to *Timothy?* yea, and made them obedient thereto? *Acts 8. 17. & 19. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 6.*

If Laying on of hands were not an Ordinance of God, and of Divine Institution (saith Mr. Blackwood Annot. on Matth. p. 690.) then the Apostles in the administration thereof had practised Will-worship; nay, which is more, had left a Rule of Will-worship unto us, Heb. 6. 1. But 'tis absurd to think that the Apostle would do either of these; therefore Laying on of hands upon baptized Persons is an Apostolical Institution.

Far be it from us, or any Christian, to harbour so uncharitable thoughts of the blessed Apostles, *viz.* that they would do any thing in Christ's Name without his Warrant. *If any Man, saith Paul, think himself to be a Prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you,*
are

are the Commandments of the Lord, 1 Cor. 14. 37. Compare this with Rom. 15. 18. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things, which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word or deed.

C H A P. VIII.

Containing a few Motives or Arguments, provoking and encouraging to Obedience to the Holy Ordinance of Imposition of Hands.

BEfore I conclude, I judge it necessary to offer two or three Motives, to stir up to Obedience such as desire to be found sincere Followers of the Lord Jesus, and of the primitive Saints, and to walk in all the Commandments of the Lord blameless; and to consider, whether they do not lie short of their Duty and Privilege, whilst they omit or neglect this precious (tho despised) Ordinance of Imposition of Hands.

Motive 1. Brethren, Consider, you have the holy Pattern of the Saints of old to stir you up to a diligent search in the Book of God's Law, to find out what his Mind and Will may be concerning you. How glad were the Children of Israel, when upon enquiry they found out that long-neglected Ordinance of sitting in Booths in the Feast of Tabernacles? *Neh. 8. 14,--17.* they did not then contend against it, or raise Objections, saying it has not been done for many years: *Samuel, David, Hezekiah,* and *Josiah* did it not, who had glorious

ous Light, and were great Reformers; and we have no immediate Vision, or miraculous Appearance of God to revive this Institution.

We find nothing of this nature stumbled them, but as they found it written, they set about the Work, *and there was great Joy*: They were not like many Souls in our days, who make Objections against Baptism and Laying on of hands; such and such eminent Men (say they) see it not, practise it not; 'tis not an Institution of Christ; if it were, sure Mr. such a one (a learned Minister and Brother) would be for it; he is a Man of greater light and understanding than you, &c. 'Tis no marvel they are thus beclouded, whilst their eyes are so fixt on Men; and instead of walking by the perfect Light of God's Word, walk by the Light of those that are so imperfect.

Motive 2. Consider that by a universal obedience to Christ, you will appear to be his Disciples indeed, and of the Remnant of the Woman's Seed, *Rev. 12. 17.* Yea you will enter into strong bands of Alliance and Friendship with the Lord Jesus: *You are my Friends* (saith he) *if you do whatsoever I command you,* *Joh. 15. 14.* This also will add boldness to the Saints. *Then shall I not be ashamed* (saith David) *when I have respect to all thy Commandments.*

Mot. 3. Let the Nature of the Ordinance move you to consider your fault and neglect herein; and as you desire that the Church you have given up your selves to walk in the order of the Gospel with, being knit and fitly framed together, may grow into a Holy Temple in the Lord. Be sure see there is no defect in the Foundation, take heed it

it wants not one principal Pillar; and let none speak slightly of this Institution, lest he provoke Jesus Christ thereby. Did he command any thing in vain? And by the same Argument you adventure to cast off this Principle, another may do so by Baptism, and consequently all the rest; and so in time God's Spiritual House be like unto the literal Temple, *viz.* not have one Stone left upon another which will not be thrown down.

Motive 4. Consider that those blessed Promises God has made of giving the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, *which the World cannot receive*, are entailed to the obedient Soul; if we will have the Blessing, we must be found in our Duty. And how has God crowned this Service, as has been shewed, with wonderful manifestations thereof? Nay, consider what measure soever God has given thee of his Spirit, by waiting upon him in other Ordinances; yet this of Imposition of hands Christ has appointed as the *Ministry* thereof to baptized Believers as such: to every particular Institution there is some special and peculiar Blessing annexed; and 'tis ordained as God's ordinary way for the conveyance of it, as I might largely shew, in respect of Preaching the Word, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Church-Censures, &c. and the like also in this of Laying on of hands: and tho God is not tied to this or that Ordinance, yet he hath tied us to the exact observation of them: He may anticipate his own Order, and give us the Mercy promised (in part) in some other way; yet we ought not to neglect our Duty.

Because

Because I have obtained Faith in some other than God's usual way for the begetting it, shall I not hear the Word preached, for the further increasing it in my Heart? Again, because I have remission of Sins, and other Blessings promised in Baptism before baptized, shall I reject that Ordinance? Sure *Cornelius* did not do so, *Acts* 10. 45, 47. And again, I feed by Faith on Jesus Christ, and receive his Flesh which is Meat indeed, and his Blood which is Drink indeed; shall I therefore refuse the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, which is appointed as the Ministry of his Body and Blood? God forbid. Even so, let none neglect this Appointment, notwithstanding any Gift, or Measure of the Holy Spirit they have received, since it has pleased God to direct to it, and left it in his House as a perpetual Ministration; *Destroy it not, for a Blessing that is in it, Isa.* 65. 8.

Motive 5. Consider the great need thou hast of the Holy Spirit, yea and of a further increase thereof, tho I should grant thou hast received it already; for without it none can savingly believe, nor call Jesus Lord. Yet there is a further Promise made to thee, as thou art a Believer in Jesus Christ: and what can a poor Saint do without the Spirit? what Temptations dost thou meet with, what Lusts and Corruptions still hast thou to mortify? and what outward Tribulations art thou (who professest the Gospel) exposed to? O therefore use all means, and particularly this, which God enjoins thee, that thou mayst obtain a further measure and increase of the Spirit of God.

Motive 6. Lastly, Consider the excellent and unspeakable worth and usefulness of the Holy Spirit; O what spiritual Profit and Advantage do the Saints of God receive hereby!

1. 'Tis the Holy Spirit that *enlightens the eyes of our Understandings*, 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, 12, 13. Eph. 1. 17. *we cannot see afar off, without our Eyes are anointed with this Eye-salve*: And O what Beauty do we hereby behold in Jesus Christ! how are our Souls taken with invisible Objects! and what an empty and nothing-World is this, when we look through the Prospect-glass of the Spirit of God upon it!

2. 'Tis the Holy Spirit that *revives and quickens us*, and makes us lively in the Paths of Righteousness, *Joh. 6. 63. Col. 2. 13.*

3. 'Tis the Spirit that *leads us in the way we should walk*, Rom. 8. 14. *yea and makes them Paths of peace and pleasantness unto our Souls*, Prov. 3. 17. 'tis he that *guides us into all Truth, and brings Christ's Words to our remembrance*, Joh. 14. 26.

4. 'Tis the Holy Spirit that *comforts us when cast down*; 'tis from hence we receive all Heavenly Consolation, *Joh. 14. 16, 26.*

5. 'Tis the Holy Spirit that *makes us profit under the Word and means of Grace*; 'tis that which *maketh our Souls to grow and flourish in the Courts of the Lord's House*, Heb. 4. 2. 1 Cor. 3. 6.

6. 'Tis the Spirit that *helps us to pray, helps our Infirmities*, and teacheth us what to pray for, and gives us *access at the Throne of Grace*; yea *makes Intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered*, Rom. 8. 26.

7. 'Tis

7. 'Tis by the Spirit we cry *Abba Father*; 'tis that which bears witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God, Rom. 8. 13, 15, 16.

8. 'Tis by the Holy Spirit we mortify the Deeds of the body, Gal. 5. 22. 'tis by that we live and stand, and are confirmed in Christ Jesus, and sanctified throughout.

9. 'Tis from the Holy Spirit that all heavenly Grace and *spiritual Gifts* flow; 'tis he that divides to every man severally as he will, 1 Cor. 12. 5, 8, 9.

10. 'Tis the Holy Spirit which is the *Earnest* of our Inheritance, and which gives an Assurance of the purchased Possession unto our Souls, Eph. 1. 10, 14.

11. 'Tis the Holy Spirit by which we are sealed to the day of Redemption, Eph. 1. 13.

12. 'Tis by the Spirit we are made strong, and enabled to overcome all Enemies, and helped to triumph over Death, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 57. 'tis by the Spirit we know that when our earthly House is dissolved we have a *Building of God*, a House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens, 2 Cor.

5. 1. These things considered, let none blame us that we so earnestly contend for the Holy Ordinance of Prayer with Imposition of Hands, in which God has promised, and so sweetly communicated, as through a Conduit-Pipe, such blessed Water of Life to our Souls. Shall it not trouble our Spirits, when Persons labour to take away the Childrens Bread, or spill any of their sweet and heavenly Milk upon the ground?

C H A P. IX.

In answer to the Conclusion of Mr. Danvers's Book.

Mr. Danvers's Conclusion.

THUS you have had a candid Account of the rise, growth, and progress of this Rite of Confirmation, or Laying on of hands, from the beginning to this day, (amongst all that have owned it) with the Authorities on which it hath been found, and imposed; together with a genuine Examination of the Grounds and Reasons each Party have given to justify the same: And may we not upon the whole, fairly come to the following Conclusions? viz.

1. That there doth not appear to be the least Scripture - precept, or Practice for any such Ordinance of Confirmation, or an imposing of

The Conclusion of this Treatise, in opposition to his.

REIDER, Thou hast had a faithful, and impartial Account of the rise, growth, and progress, of this holy, tho contemned Ordinance of Imposition of hands, from the beginning of the Gospel-Ministration to this day; and how asserted amongst many Perswasions, with the Authorities on which it has been enjoined; together with the grounds given by Antient and Modern Writers to justify it: And from the whole we also may come to these following Conclusions; viz.

1. That there appears full and ample Precept and Practice from Scripture for this Ordinance of Imposition of hands on all baptized Believers as such, before admitted to the Lord's Table.

2. That

hands upon all the Baptized before they break bread, or are admitted into Church-communion.

2. That the Instances produced to prove it an Apostolical Tradition, are impious Lies and Forgeries.

3. That the Authorities by which it hath been heretofore enjoined, were nothing but Antichristian Can. & Decrees.

4. That the most eminent Witnesses and Confessors that opposed the Antichristian Usurpations and Innovations, have all along witnessed against, and imprecated this of Confirmation, viz. the Novatians, Donatists, Waldenses, Greek Churches, & Wickliffians.

All which are worthy the serious consideration of all sober and judicious Christians, and especially recommended to them, who having rejected Infants, and embraced Believers Baptism, do yet cleave to this Practice,

2. That the Instances to prove it an Apostolical Tradition or Institution, are the pious Sayings, and written Verities of Christ's Disciples.

3. That the Authorities by which it was at first enjoined, were none else save Great Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

4. That many eminent Writers both antient and modern, have born witness for it.

All which is worthy to be minded, and commended to the consideration of those who having rejected Infants, and embraced Believers Baptism, do oppose a Principle of the same nature, and annexed to it, with these following Observations.

1. It is most manifest that those Popes, Councils, and Fathers, that have corrupted, polluted, and changed the holy Ordinance of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, did also change, alter, and corrupt this of Imposition of Hands.

2. That tho the principal Arguments the Church
of

with these following Observations, viz.

1. It is most manifest that those Popes, Councils and Fathers, that have enjoined and imposed Infants sprinkling for a Sacrament, or an Ordinance of Christ, have enjoined this also as such.

2. That the principal Arguments pretended for the one, have been urged and pleaded for the other also, viz. Apostolical Tradition, and pretended Inferences and Consequences from Scripture.

3. That the famous Churches and Confessors, that have opposed Infants sprinkling as superstitious, Popish and Antichristian, have upon the same account opposed this also.

4. That it doth not appear that any baptized Church or People, did ever in any Age or Country own such a Principle, or Practice to this day, except some in this Nation in these late times.

of Rome, and others who have drunk of the Whore's Cup, do bring to defend the Rite called Confirmation, is humane Tradition, and far-fetch'd Consequences from Scripture, yet there is plain Scripture-proof for the holy Institution of Imposition of hands upon baptized Believers.

3. That many godly Persons in several ages have opposed Popish laying on of hands, on the same account that we reject Popish Baptism, and not otherwise.

4. It appears not that any baptized Church in any Country, have denied Imposition of hands upon Believers baptized, as such, to be an Institution of Jesus Christ, nor ever writ against it, as some in this Nation have done; (no ways for their Credit, nor Honour of the Gospel.)

These things being so, it may be enquired what ground and reason our Brethren in this Nation had at first, or have now, to oppose this Divine Institution of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**A brief Reply to a Book called,
A Treatise concerning Laying on
of Hands.**

*Written by a nameless Author, and published
in the Year 1691.*

THE *first Reason* (he says) why they cannot own Laying on of Hands on all Believers, is, because there must be a Command; or at least some Example for it, *pag. 3.*

Ans. We have proved in the preceding Treatise, that we have both a Command and Example for it, if a Command of God, and an Oracle of God, is all one: See *Heb. 5. 12.* That which is an Oracle of God, is a Command of God; but *Laying on of Hands, &c.* is an Oracle of God, *Ergo.* And as to Examples, we have them also: see *Acts 8.* and *Acts 19.*

2ly. Because (they say) they believe neither our Lord nor his Disciples were under it, *pag. 4.*

Ans. Our Lord, we have shewed, was under it; the Father laid his Hands upon him when he came out of the Water, and thereby sealed him; the Holy Ghost in the likeness of a Dove

Dove rested upon him: And no doubt but our Lord *laid his Hands* upon his Disciples, since he taught this Precept as a Principle of his Doctrine, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* True, we read not of their Baptism, nor of this neither; therefore from thence they may as well say they were not baptized, as that they had not Hands laid upon them.

3ly. Because (say they) if the Apostles were under it, they must have an Administrator; and who, say they, should that be? *p. 4.* But there is nothing said of it, &c.

Ans. 1. Our Lord Christ might be the Administrator, who is the *great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls*, as I said afore.

2. And it no more follows that they were not baptized, than that they were not under *Laying on of Hands*; *i. e.* because there is nothing said of either.

4ly. Their *fourth Reason* is the same with their first.

5ly. Their *fifth Reason* is, because, they say, the Church at *Jerusalem* was not under it, *pag. 5.*

Ans. Was not the *Hebrew Church* the Church at *Jerusalem*? Now they, 'tis evident, were under it, or had laid it: *Not laying again* presupposeth they had once *laid it*, or were under it, as well as Baptized.

6ly. Their *sixth Reason* is, because an Ordinance necessary to Church-Communion ought very plainly to be expressed, *p. 6.*

Ans.

Answ. So is this of Imposition of Hands, *Heb.* 5. 12. *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. *Acts* 8. and *Acts* 19. 6.

7ly. Because, they say, our Lord did leave no Ordinance as absolutely necessary to Church-Communion, but such as holds forth his Death and Resurrection, p. 9. as Baptism and the Lord's Supper, &c.

Answ. Who told them so? or doth it follow that because Baptism and the Supper are Figures of our Lord's Death, &c. therefore this must be a figure of the same, or no Ordinance? This is not argumentative nor demonstrative.

8ly. Because Salvation is promised on the Terms of Faith, Repentance, and Baptism; and from hence they argue there is no need of any such Ordinance as this of *Laying on of Hands*, p. 7.

Answ. Salvation is promised particularly to Faith; *He that believeth hath the Son,--hath Life, and shall be saved,* Mark 16. 16. therefore need not I be baptized? Moreover, I deny that any Ordinance gives a right to Salvation, any other ways than as it is an evidence of that Right or Title to our Consciences. Our Right or Title is Christ's Righteousness, or his active and passive Obedience only. But should a Man be convinced that Laying on of Hands, Church-Communion, Order, and Discipline, or giving to the Poor, &c. were Duties which he omitted, would his pretended Faith, Repentance, and Baptism, render him a sincere Christian? No, he must do all things Christ commanded, or taught to be done,

done, which he is convinced of, as well as those three things.

9ly. Their *ninth Reason* against Laying on of Hands, is taken from those Effects that followed this Ordinance, viz. the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit.

Ans. The same Effects followed all other Gospel-Ordinances: this we have also answered in the precedent Treatise.

10ly. Their *tenth Reason* is, because the Holy Spirit was sometimes given without *Laying on of Hands*, pag. 8.

Ans. The Holy Spirit is promised to them that are baptized; but because some received the Spirit before baptized, needed they not be baptized? In *Acts* 10. 44. *Cornelius* received the Spirit, to confirm the Ministration of the Word to the Gentiles before baptized, yet was commanded to be baptized; nor had he so much of the Spirit as to need no more; and therefore came under this Ordinance also. Besides, because God may step out of his usual way, must we do so too? No sure.

11ly. Their *eleventh Reason* is, because none but such Persons as were eminently gifted did impose Hands, &c.

Ans. The Apostles did all they did as eminently gifted: but if they are not to be followed by all regular Pastors, or Elders (only ordinarily gifted) in Laying on of hands, then not in Preaching, Baptizing, nor in the Administration of any other

other Gospel-Ordinance: but this is also fully answered in the preceding Treatise.

In pag. 17, 18, &c. they would make the Reader conclude that the *Hebrews* being said to be dull of Hearing, and so needed to be taught again the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, doth not refer to these six Principles, but to Matters relating to the Priestly Office of Christ, &c.

Answ. 'Tis true, the Apostle was about to instruct them into higher Mysteries, viz. about Christ's Priesthood; but he found them to have need of *Milk*, and not of *strong Meat*: And most evident it is, that by strong Meat he refers to the things which he proceeds to instruct them in; but the Milk he speaks of are these things, viz. *Repentance, Faith, Baptism, and Laying on of Hands, &c.*

They hardly understood the first Rudiments or *A B C* of the Christian Faith: but to suppose that Milk, or those first Principles he speaks of, is the strong Meat, is preposterous. True, Christ is properly the Foundation; but by the Foundation here is meant those first Principles which every Babe in Christ was to be instructed in, and to practise, and then to go on to perfection.

Doth it follow, because 'tis said, *not laying again the Foundation of Repentance, &c.* that the Apostle only refers to Christ, who is the Foundation of our Salvation, and of every Principle of the Christian Religion? Evident it is that the *first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ* are here
F called

no

A brief Reply, &c.

called the Foundation-principles, not that they are all Fundamentals of Salvation, but of Church-constitution: for we will not say (nor any else we hope) that none can be saved who are not baptized, and come not under Laying on of Hands; yet every true regular Church, and regular Member, ought to be under the practice of both those Principles.

But I see no need to add any thing further in answer to this Treatise, it seeming to me to have the least of Argument in it of any Book I have seen writ against this Ordinance.



F I N I S.

Postscript.

NOW tho I am fully established in this Principle of Christ's Doctrine, and do believe it is of the same nature with Baptism, yet I am not of the opinion that such Members in a Church, who are convinced of it, and are under it, ought to separate themselves from the Church, because the other Members of the said Church see it not: no, but they ought to bear one with another, until God shall please to open their eyes. ---*We all see but in part, and know but in part*; therefore ought to bear one with another. Yet let that Church who are of one Mind and Judgment in this matter, walk as they have received; and let all take heed how they set light by any Holy Precept and Principle of Christ's Doctrine, much less to teach Men to break the least of his Commandments, or to cast such under contempt and reproach, who in conscience towards God speak and write according to the Light they have received in this and other Cases. Must we be their Enemies for telling them the truth? Farewel.